

LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL, 1862.

THE COST OF AMUSING THE PUBLIC.

IF an account could be furnished of all the money that is annually spent in this country on amusements, we suspect that the sum total would be found to be far larger than any one has the slightest conception of. Making a rough estimate by the aid of the statistics which have been furnished to us, and including in the list of amusements not alone Theatres, Concert-rooms, Exhibitions, and Entertainments, but also the performances of street minstrels, acrobats, Punch and Judy, and the like, we believe we shall be justified in setting down the gross amount at a figure somewhere between two and three millions sterling. The statistics of the latter class of exhibitions, however, are not within our reach; and in this paper we shall deal only with those amusements which have a local habitation, and are conducted upon business principles as a branch of commerce. Those who denounce theatres, and exhibitions of a kindred nature, have possibly little or no idea of the regular and systematic manner in which the affairs of such places are conducted, nor of the large number of families which they find in employment and bread. Now-a-days the affairs of a theatre are conducted with as much scrupulous, business-like exactness as those of a bank, or a merchant's counting-house. The mimic life and the pleasantries of the stage, which the public take as so much trivial pastime, become a matter of dry figures in the hands of the Treasurer, and resolve them-

selves, at the end of the week, into a carefully prepared debtor and creditor account, and the payment of salaries and wages. The treasury of a theatre and the counting-house of a manufactory are practically the same thing on a Saturday afternoon. Men, women, and children go to both to be paid for a week's hard work, and to be enabled to pay those who serve them—the butcher and baker who supply the meals, the tailor who furnishes the clothes, the landlord who provides the shelter, and the schoolmaster who teaches the children.

The employment which the theatre provides has, however, a much wider scope than this. It is not alone the actors, whose persons we are familiar with on the stage, who are enabled to live and bring up their families; but there is another class, whom we never see, and whose existence many do not even suspect, who are equally dependent upon the theatre for their means of subsistence, and whose labour is equally essential to the conduct of the establishment. There are scenic artists, scene painters, carpenters, scene shifters, and gas men, all employed within the walls of the theatre; and out of it, at their own homes, costumiers, tailors, shoemakers, hosiers, wigmakers, jewellers, upholsterers, armourers, printers, draughtsmen, engravers, and bill-stickers. These artists and artisans devote themselves exclusively to theatrical work. A stage carpenter could not make a chest of drawers fit for domestic use. If you were to

order such a thing of him, you would probably find that the drawers were all dummies, or that the whole concern was designed for a trick in a pantomime. So the tailor will fit you with an embroidered blue velvet tunic, or a pair of trunks; but he will scarcely undertake to furnish you with a surtout, or a pair of peg-tops, suitable for the streets. Generally speaking, the theatrical hosier's hose are all particoloured, the theatrical shoemaker's shoes all red-heeled, the theatrical jeweller's jewels all glass and tinfoil, the theatrical armourer's armour all white iron and blue paint. Their craft is thus confined exclusively to theatrical work, and their art aspires to produce nothing which will stand the test of the light of day. It is, in fact, a branch of manufacture and trade called into existence and operation solely by the requirements of the theatre.

The whole number of theatres in the United Kingdom is 133. We may table them thus:—

Theatres in London	25
" in the English Counties and Channel Islands	91
" in Wales	3
" in Scotland	9
" in Ireland	5
Total	133

We should expect to find very few theatres in Scotland, where the religious prejudice runs so strong against such amusements; but it is somewhat unaccountable that there should be still fewer in Ireland, where no such prejudice exists, and where the people are more numerous, more vivacious, and naturally addicted to all kinds of sport and entertainment. The fact, we suspect, must be ascribed to that want of prosperity which has made Ireland exceptional in many other respects. It cannot be Ireland's will, but her poverty which has made her consent to have only five theatres in all the land; for no people appreciate the drama better than the Irish, and nowhere are actors more warmly recognized and applauded than in Dublin and Belfast. Scotland, with less than a third of Ireland's population, has

almost double the number of theatres. But here the thing is overdone: the supply is greater than the demand. Except at Glasgow, and, at certain seasons, in Edinburgh, theatricals do not flourish in Scotland. The Scotch are not unappreciative; far from it. An Edinburgh audience is said to be the most refined and discriminative in Europe, and actors are more proud of laurels gathered in the modern Athens than even in London itself. But, unfortunately for the dramatic art, the audiences in Scotland are far more select than numerous, and the cause of this is too well known to require any explanation at our hands.

With the view of furnishing as close an estimate as can possibly be given, without the aid of official returns, of the amount of money expended, and of the number of persons employed in the work of amusing the public, we shall separate the places of public entertainment into four classes—Theatres, Music Halls, Entertainments (so called), and Gardens.

First, then, as to the Theatres. In London there are altogether 25, as we have stated; but as two of these have been closed for some length of time, we have, practically, to deal with only 23. The number of persons employed at theatres of the first class, such as Covent Garden, Drury Lane, the Lyceum, the Adelphi, and the Haymarket, varies from 70 to 350. If we take, for example, Drury Lane Theatre during pantomime time, we find that the number of persons employed every night is about 300. Allowing for the large families of some, and the small families of others, we may safely multiply this by 3 to find the total of persons who derive their bread from this theatre. Thus we have in all 900 persons. This, however, is not the largest number that might be adduced. When the Opera House in the Haymarket was in the heyday of its prosperity, more than a thousand persons went to the treasury every Saturday to receive their salaries and wages.

The number of persons employed at all the London theatres is about 4,000. And if we give to each 3

dependents, we shall have a total of 12,000 persons deriving their incomes from theatrical employment. The number 3 here is not by any means excessive; for though the majority may be unmarried, and many of them mere children, yet it is a well-known fact that little boys and girls of six and seven years often support a whole family by their slender earnings.

In estimating the amount of money taken at the doors of the London theatres, it would not do to select the best period of the year—pantomime time—when the various houses are crowded to the ceiling. Some houses are closed during a portion of the year, and, as a general rule, the receipts fall off during the summer. Taking, then, a general average, we find that the whole amount that flows into the treasuries of the 25 London theatres during the year is about 350,000*l*. Thus we have for London:—

Persons employed in theatres. 4,000
Money taken at the 25 London
theatres in 12 months'. £350,000

In addition to the above, there are about 30 different theatrical tradesmen, employing in all somewhere about 160 hands.

We come now to the provincial theatres, of which there are 108. At the best time of the year (Christmas), the first-class provincial theatres employ about 100 persons each, the second class 55, and the third class 30. The average for all the year round we find to be 40. This gives us 4,320 persons continually employed in theatrical work in the provinces. Taking the small theatres with the large, and making allowance for periods when some of them are closed, we believe we shall be very near the mark in fixing the average nightly receipts all the year round at 12*l*. The account of the provincial theatres accordingly stands thus:—

Number of persons employed 4,320
Money taken at the 108
provincial theatres during
12 months £388,800

We take next the Music Halls, which now represent a very important branch of the trade of amusing

the public. These capacious and splendidly appointed halls were wholly unknown a dozen years ago. Their increasing numbers now, and the popularity of the entertainment which they present, are certainly proofs that the taste for refined amusements is rapidly spreading among the public. It is true grog, beer, and tobacco form a considerable element of the entertainment; but still the class of music presented and the ability of the singers are of a comparatively high order. The comic singing, so much in favour at these places, is possibly not altogether unexceptionable; but the selections from operas are given with a completeness and an effect which are not to be enjoyed anywhere else out of the opera-house. The theatres have looked with much jealousy and apprehension on the increase of music halls. But after the experience of the last two years, when the music halls have attained to the highest pitch of prosperity that could possibly be reached, we do not think that either managers or actors can say that they have suffered any damage through them. The theatres have been as full as ever; nay, we might say fuller than ever. As for actors, many of them have turned comic singers at music halls, and are earning double and treble the amount of money that they would ever have hoped to obtain by acting at the theatres. Does not a nigger melodist sing at three or four halls on the same evening, and drive from one to the other in his own carriage? We believe that the music halls, instead of injuring the theatres and the opera houses, are, on the contrary, nurseries to those places. They strike at the root of worse places of amusement; they afford entertainment to a large class who stand much in need of it, and they excite a taste for the more refined theatre and opera.

The number of music halls in London is 18; and the total number throughout the country, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, 119; making in all 137. The music halls are thus in excess of the theatres. As an example of the importance of this interest, and of the grand scale on which such places are conducted,

we are enabled to state that the proprietors of one of the largest Halls in London employ no less than 150 persons, 70 of whom are 'professionals,' and the rest servants and attendants. The sum disbursed every Saturday at the treasury is over 300*l*.

The charities belonging to the theatrical profession, and supported mainly by its members, are numerous and important. Much as the profession has been maligned, it is a notorious fact that no class of the public is so provident or so charitably disposed one towards another as actors. It would not be difficult to show, also, that actors are distinguished above the members of all other professions for their frugality and saving habits. The great majority of them have very little chance of laying by anything, but those who earn good salaries almost invariably save and invest money against a rainy day. We could mention at least a score of actors in London who are well known among their fellows to be 'warm men,' and a goodly number who might fairly be described as rich. The array of theatrical charities is truly a noble one. In London alone they number seven, viz., the Drury Lane Fund, the Covent Garden Fund, the Royal General Theatrical Fund, the Dramatic, Equestrian, and Musical Sick Fund Association, the Britannia Theatre Sick Fund, and last, though not least, the Royal Dramatic College. The funds in the possession of these charities are very large. The Drury Lane Fund holds 40,000*l*., the Covent Garden 32,000*l*., the General Theatrical 13,000*l*., the Dramatic and Equestrian 1,400*l*., and the Royal Dramatic College some 3,000*l*., over and above 4,000*l*. expended in building the college. The earnest spirit which has been displayed by the profession, and particularly by Mr. Benjamin Webster, the master, and Mr. Anson, the secretary, in originating, building, and endowing this Home for aged and decayed actors in the course of two or three short years, speaks more eloquently for the warmhearted sympathy and brotherly feeling which prevail among actors than any words

that could be used. The college, when finished, will contain accommodation for twenty persons. Each one will be provided with three rooms—sitting-room, bed-room, and kitchen, with other conveniences. The allowance to each from the funds of the charity will be, besides the suite of rooms, coals, candles, and ten shillings per week.

The total sum of money set apart for the relief of the members of the profession in sickness and old age is thus close upon 90,000*l*.

There is another class of persons who derive an income from the organized business of amusing the public—we mean the dramatic authors. This class, though perhaps but little esteemed by managers and actors, may nevertheless be truly said to be the mainspring of the whole theatrical machine. What could managers and actors do without pieces? And good pieces, as a rule, can only come from skilled hands. Amateurs may occasionally write good novels or good verses; but an amateur author who had not previously made the stage a close study never yet wrote a good play. There are technicalities and artifices in stage writing which nothing but experience and observation can teach. It requires almost an apprenticeship to be a good playwright. It might be said that any one of ordinary literary ability, with pen, ink, and paper to his hand, could write a play. But so it might be said, that any one with leather and lapstone, wax-ends and an awl to his hand, could make a pair of shoes. So he could perhaps, but both the play and the shoes would be rather clumsy, and the one would be no more likely to draw an audience than the other to attract a customer. Dramatic writing is not so much a regular profession in this country as it is in France; but still it is to some extent a profession, and its members are so far banded together as a class, that they have a sort of guild for the protection of their mutual interests. This guild is known as the Dramatic Authors' Society, and almost every recognized author of repute is a member of it. Its object is entirely a business one. The members re-

gister all their pieces in the books of the society, and the management, for a certain per centage by way of commission, collects the fees for the performance of their pieces in the provinces. The business of collection is simplified in this way. The provincial theatres are rated at so much per annum according to their size and importance. One pays, say 200*l.* per annum, another 150*l.*, another 100*l.*, and so on down to the lowest rate, and for these annual payments the managers are entitled to play any pieces registered on the society's list. The whole receipts of the society are then divided among the authors according to the number of times their pieces have been played, and in shares in proportion to the class of piece. The system of disposing of pieces to managers in London is not so advantageous to the authors as it is in Paris. In the French capital the playwrights enjoy what are called *les droits d'auteur*; that is to say, each author is entitled to a certain proportion of the receipts of every night's performance while his piece is played. The Académie Royale allows the author 500 francs for each of the first forty nights, and 200 francs for every subsequent night. The Théâtre Français gives one twelfth of the gross receipts, and the lower class of theatres, such as the Odéon, Variétés, Gymnase, &c., from one sixth to one eighth. The origin of this system is rather curious. In 1653 the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, who had promised Tristram l'Ermite 100 crowns for a comedy called 'Les Rivaux,' refused to give more than fifty when they discovered that it was by Quinault. The latter, however, eventually succeeded in obtaining one ninth of the receipts on each performance of his comedy. From this time the sharing system was established, and it prevails to this day.

It would not be easy to say what amount is annually paid to authors in this country for dramatic work, but we think we shall not be very far wrong in placing the limit at 10,000*l.*

Gathering up our figures, then, we find the following result:—

Annual receipts of the London theatres . . .	£350,000
Ditto of the provincial theatres . . .	388,800
Ditto of the London music halls, entertainments, and gardens . . .	162,000
Ditto of the provincial music halls, entertainments, and gardens . . .	178,500
Total amount spent in public amusements . . .	<u>£1,079,300</u>

Number of persons employed by the London theatres . . .	4,160
Ditto by the provincial theatres . . .	4,320
Ditto by the London music halls, entertainments, and gardens . . .	1,080
Ditto by the provincial music halls, entertainments, and gardens . . .	1,785
Total number of persons employed in amusing the public . . .	<u>11,345</u>

If we multiply this by 3, as before, we shall have a total of some 34,000 persons who derive their means of subsistence from the business of amusing the public.

Having thus given some idea of the importance of public amusements as a commercial interest, it will not be out of place to add a few words with regard to the moral aspects of the actor's profession. The ancient reproach which actors incurred when the law regarded them as vagabonds, and the clergy refused them Christian burial, is unhappily not altogether removed. There are many persons who firmly believe that the theatre, and everything connected with it, is very wicked, and that actors are all more or less dissolute and irreligious. These persons do not trouble themselves to reflect that theatrical affairs, like everything else, have undergone reformation with the course of time, and that managers and actors in the conduct of themselves and their business have been obliged to conform to the improved habits and tastes of the age. There was a time within the memory of those now living, when theatres

were conducted upon principles which justly brought scandal upon the whole profession. Those were the days when idle and dissolute men, with a little money at their command, became managers just to indulge their passion for dabbling in theatrical affairs, and for the sake of being on intimate terms with actors and actresses. Managers of this class encouraged 'bloods' and 'swells' behind the scenes; and instead of catering for the public at large, secured titled visitors to their boxes and stalls by privately exhibiting the mysteries of their coulisses. We all know what scandals came of this pernicious practice. But all this is changed now. Theatres have become commercial speculations in these days, and managers look for support only to the public at large. If any one thinks that 'behind the scenes' of a theatre is still a wicked place, let him find a valid excuse—and nothing but 'business' will avail him—to go 'behind' at the Adelphi or the Lyceum. If he be unknown and unaccompanied by any one belonging to the theatre, he will probably be asked, as soon as he has set foot on the stage, what business he has there. If he be allowed to remain, he will soon find himself in the way, for the stage of a theatre during the performance is a sternly busy place, and carpenters and scene-shifters setting and removing 'flats' have no respect for persons. Printed notices meet his eye on every hand. 'Strict silence must be observed behind the scenes.' 'No one is allowed to stand in the wings.' Let him visit the green-room and he will find all the proprieties of a private drawing-room observed with jealous punctiliousness. No one is admitted here who has not business in the theatre. Actors and actresses sit

side by side on the sofas, waiting to be called to the stage, and in the mean time occupy themselves with pleasant chat, in reading, and the ladies, with their sewing or embroidery.

The slanders which pursue young and attractive actresses are for the most part the malicious inventions of scandal-mongers. Certain reckless and uncharitable people set down every pretty girl who appears on the stage as a social outcast, just because a set of young and vicious fools run after her and make free with her name. Have we not been told over and over again that ladies, whom we know to be happy wives and mothers, with children at their knee, are the mistresses of men whom they never saw in their lives? We hear these stories every day; but it only requires us to step within the theatre to be convinced that they are, in most cases, reckless and wicked falsehoods. We do not wish to urge that actors and actresses are better than other people, but simply that they are no worse; and perhaps if we were to take into account the temptations to which they are exposed, and the life of excitement they lead, we might justly give them credit for possessing at least some of the virtues in a higher degree than the members of other professions which are better esteemed. The theatre, acting as it does so powerfully upon Society, is such an engine for good or evil, that everything bearing on its purification and elevation demands our kindly interest and support. It is with the intention of throwing light on matters as they stand, and to dissipate erroneous and mischievous impressions, that we examine it from various points of view in such contributions as the present.

ARTISTS' NOTES FROM CHOICE PICTURES.

La Crème de la Crème.

PAINTERS, let us never doubt it, have their paternal partialities: else how happens it, as we loiter over a picture, which has enough of human intelligence as well as mechanical contrivance to tempt us to return to it once and again, that we find ourselves almost unconsciously dwelling on some special portion, some quaint or graceful fancy, some loveable or mirthful face, except that we instinctively feel that it must have been a Little Benjamin of the painter's, over which he lingered lovingly, and parted from sorrowing, playing with his pencil on dimpled mouth, or laughing eye, or sunny curl—'in Paradise the while'?

It may be a mere whim this; yet it is pleasant to fancy that it is not wholly so, but that we are thus far *en rapport* with the painter. At any rate it is to some such whim that we are indebted for the graceful design on the following page. In the course of his studies of the best works of our British painters, our artist has found a personal as well as professional pleasure in picking out here and there the faces that have most delighted himself; that were at once the loveliest and the most interesting; that seemed, to sum up all in a word, to have been the painter's own favourites. He has allowed us to select for our pages a few of these 'Artists' Notes from Choice Pictures,' as we may very fairly entitle them, and he will when necessary accompany the faces (as in this instance) with a small sketch of the picture from which they were taken, in order to indicate their place and purpose in the composition. In this way we shall have what the annotator deems the very essence of the picture, and at the same time, we hope, not offend the graver critic who might object to our picking out 'pretty bits' as prejudicial to the due appreciation of the picture as a whole.

The reader has recognized at a glance in the small sketch the charming painting of 'Sancho in the Apartment of the Duchess,' by C. R. Leslie, R.A., perhaps the happiest of the painter's conceptions, and one of the most generally attractive of the Vernon pictures in the South Kensington Museum. Leslie first painted the subject in 1823 for his friendly patron the Earl of Egremont. That is an admirable picture—every one who has been at Petworth will remember it—but the Vernon picture, painted twenty years later, differs from it considerably, and the variations are nearly all improvements. Leslie repeated the subject on a smaller scale for the poet Rogers, at whose sale the little picture brought 1,150 guineas—very much to the painter's delight (he was present at the sale), and a sufficient proof of the popularity of the picture. Its popularity, indeed, reached even to the United States, for the painter was constrained to produce a third repetition of it for an admiring American.

Painter and subject were in this instance exactly in harmony. Genial, gentle, full of a quiet, kindly humour, and with a keen eye for *pleasant* peculiarities of character, Leslie would thoroughly relish and assimilate so delightful a narrative as that of the interview of honest Sancho with the Duchess—one of the most enjoyable chapters in the second part of 'Don Quixote.' It is hardly necessary to recall the passage to the memory. Don Quixote has been expatiating after dinner to the Duke and Duchess on the peerless charms of Dulcinea del Toboso, and rehearsing the enchantments of which his princess equally with himself is a victim. The hour for the afternoon nap has arrived. The Duke, having directed his servants to treat the Don with all the courtesy and respect due to so eminent

a knight errant, has retired to take his siesta, and Sancho has come by special invitation of the Duchess to pass the hour alone with her and her ladies in a cool and pleasant apartment. The Squire, having first cautiously examined every nook and cranny to see that no one is concealed who might overhear the conversation, has seated himself on a low stool near her Grace's feet, that he might 'sit as governor and speak as squire,' and having given it as his own private and particular opinion that the Don his master is 'a downright madman,' 'as mad as a March hare,' goes on to relate how he had himself, 'knowing his blind side,' palmed off upon the Don the story, 'as wild and uncertain as the hills of Ubeda,' of the enchantment of the Lady Dulcinea, 'but whom you must know, is, in fact, *between you and I*, no more enchanted than the man in the moon.'

It is just the moment of that confidential utterance which the painter has seized. 'Between you and I,' says honest Sancho; and he puts on his knowingest look, and twinkles his merry eye, and lays his forefinger along the side of his nose. You have the very man before you. Sancho could have been no other than we see him here, and he must have told the story in this very way. Leslie caught the turn of face and the peculiar action of the finger from Chantrey. The great sculptor loved a merry story heartily, and before fitting companions related one with unction. One day Chantrey, being in mirthful mood, looked so irresistibly comical as he was thus giving point to a sly allusion, that Leslie, who was just then considering how to represent the squire, begged him to remain so for a moment that he might use him as a model.

And this ludicrous position of the finger really serves as a key to the idea in the composition. The Duchess, already abundantly tickled at Sancho's odd sayings, finds this

last touch of unexpected familiarity almost too much even for her well-disciplined self-restraint and courtly gravity, at the same time her thorough kindheartedness forbids her from any outward display of hilarity at the expense of Sancho's simple manners. And how exquisitely is this shown! In the whole range of pictorial art there is no happier expression of the sense of enjoyment breaking into laughter, but restrained by a feeling of decorum, courtesy, and kind feeling. The sweetest and most delicate smile was stealing over that lovely face, and there it is checked midway and preserved for ever.

'It is a great pity, Leslie,' wrote Washington Irving to his friend, he himself being at the time in Spain and enthusiastic on all Spanish matters, 'it is a great pity, now that you are engaged in painting Spanish subjects, that you don't get a peep at the country and its people. The countenance, figure, air, attitude, walk, and dress of a Spaniard all have a peculiar character.' No doubt Irving was right. But we hardly share in his regret. Leslie would have given something more of Spanish character to his pictures and people, but he would probably have lost something of his simplicity and naturalness. It is seldom, if ever, that a painter is as much at home with foreign character as he is with native. We might have had a duchess with a more Spanish air, attitude, and countenance, but we should have had no such lovely and loveable a being as we now have:

'A thing of beauty and a joy for ever.'

We might have had truer Spanish damsels than the owners of the two fair faces—whom our artist could not resist taking from the right-hand corner of the picture to place alongside of their mistress—but we may well doubt whether they would have dwelt so pleasantly in the memory.



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THE MAD CABMAN.

IT was a close cab I hailed—a yellow cab—and its number was 1676. I remember the number distinctly, and I will tell you how it happened that its number and colour have stuck so like burrs to my memory. When I got out of the door of the Freemasons' Tavern (on the night of February —, 1860), where the dinner of the 'Benevolent Superannuated Night Porters' Association' had been held, and called a close cab from the stand, as the cabman got down slowly from his box and opened the door for me, with the matty twist and tug peculiar to the craft, I looked inside and saw that one of the cushions was torn nearly in half, and that the foot-mat was kicked up in a dirty heap in one corner. Upon which, observing the number of the cab to be 1676, and somewhat, perhaps, exhilarated by the 'Benevolent Night Porters' champagne, I remarked good-naturedly that 'one might expect things to be at sixes and sevens in cab 1676.' The cabman growled something in return, but he made no other answer.

One other thing, too, I noticed about the cab—having a rather sensitive eye for colour—and that was, that the vehicle was painted a bright canary colour, bright as the wings of a goldfinch: now yellow being a colour I peculiarly abhor, except in sunshine and calceolarias, I grumbled, half aloud and half to myself, that 'it must have been a madman who painted a cab such a colour.'

'No more mad than you, master,' replied instantly an angry voice from somewhere or other; but whether it was the waterman, who now stood holding the door, and hoping 'I would remember him,' and whose pewter badge shone like silver in the gas-light; whether it was some street boy lurking round for pence; whether it was a drunken waiter, or even some mere impertinent passer-by, I could not in the hurry of the moment very well determine. I remember, however, replying to the waterman, as I gave him a penny—

'When I forget thee then shall Long Acre forget thy cunning;' a

foolish perversion of Scripture, and so unmeaning, that the very uttering of it struck me in an instant with the conviction that I had taken too much wine. So the waterman thought, too, for I heard him as he passed the cabman say—

'The cove's sprung—take care of him, he's worth half a shiner to ye!'

I felt vexed at the time, but I said nothing, but roused all my cautiousness, determined to watch this cabman narrowly, and resist all attempts at opposition. Wine turns some men into braggarts, others it makes cowards. Some sing, and others talk, when wine mounts up into their brain. Me it makes silent, wary, suspicious, and cautious. It quickens me, it extends my mental vision, it heightens all my senses. It seems—if I may so express it—to come to the windows of my mind, and rub a vapour from them, so that I see people clearer and deeper.

It specially had this effect on me on the night in question, so before the cabman had yet shuffled up the capes of his coat, and tied a fresh knot in his whip, I had calculated how many miles it was from Long Acre to my cottage on Downham Green, east of Hammersmith, and observed that the horse was a good one, and untired.

'Vere to, sir?' said the cabman, forcing the door with great difficulty into its proper place, and then with all his strength grinding down the rusty or bruised handle.

'To No. 4, De Beauvoir Terrace, Downham Green, Hammersmith.'

'And how many miles do you make it?' said the sullen rogue again, as he rudely thrust his rough face in at the window, speaking with a sour, hard voice.

I replied that I called it not quite five.

'Not much less,' said the man bitterly, with a growl, as he put one foot on the step to mount to his coachbox.

'And mind it's double fare, sir, after twelve,' he added, returning again to carefully pull up both windows, and to re-open and re-slam the opposite door of the cab.

I did not like the vindictive look he gave me as he did this; but I said nothing, for I knew his number, and the wine made me reckless of all dangers, but I did not know the motive of all that care then.

'Will you go on,' I cried, 'with your ramshackle cab, or I'll get out and take another—a better one?'

'Ve'll go on fast enough presently,' growled the ill-conditioned fellow with a peculiar emphasis, as he jumped up on his seat. The horse spluttered about for a moment on the stones, struck out a spark or two with its hoofs, and then sprang forward. The waterman, flinging down his water bucket, took off his hat ironically to my driver. I heard a voice behind us calling for a 'cab, quick.'

'Take care how you drive that there gentleman,' cried out a policeman, and we were off. The lamps of Long Acre passed us in quick procession; it seemed but a minute, and we were in St. Martin's Lane. At that instant the gusty wind bore across the road the 'half-past twelve,' struck by the bell of St. Martin's Church.

The driver, thinking of his overfare, turned, and tapping at the window, with a brutal leer asked me if I heard 'the clock a-striking;' but I did not reply, for I had taken a strange dislike to the man, and my only wish now was to get as soon as possible to my own home, and rid myself of a fellow probably half intoxicated, and evidently determined to be extortionate and troublesome.

By this time it had begun to rain fast; the mist, before wavering and wandering, now fell in long, lashing lines, that beat fiercely against the cab windows, covering them with a moving surface of water, that rendered it impossible for the time to see out of either glass. The wind, too, beat against the cab, and flew howling before us up the street. Still we drove on fast and steadily up Regent Street, where now nothing could be seen but a stray policeman cowering up in a doorway.

I never saw such rain before nor since. It seemed to whiten all the pavement, and to madly dance and splash, as if each drop were a living

thing. Yet all this time that the rain seemed ready to beat in the windows, the cabman, with head bent deprecatingly down, drove on singing scraps of a coarse sea-song:

'Belay there! belay! was all he would say,
As we tossed in the chops of the Channel.'

I struck the window angrily, to stop his ribald and insolent song; but he did not seem to hear me, and paid no attention to my signal; so throwing myself back in a corner of the cab, I began to turn over the chief events of the evening in my mind, just to wile away the time.

Through a pleasant haze the past hours seemed again to defile before me. I went through all the moments from the time the man at the door gave me the ticket for my hat, to the time that I gave it back again to the same man, and told the waiter to call me a cab from the nearest stand. I remembered all the bows and hand-shakings of the Committee Room, and how at last, in an irregular body, we moved in to the dining-hall, marshalled by the jolly-looking, portly stewards, with blue rosettes at their buttonholes. I remembered the buzz as old Lord Foptoddle, our noble chairman, arrived and took his seat; I remembered, too, with a smile, the bursting out of 'Down among the barley,' from the professional singers, just as the dessert was set upon the table. Then came the procession round the table of 'the superannuated night porters,' and the tremendous auctioneer's blow of the toastmaster's hammer, that heralded the first toast. Again I seemed to hear the anile speeches, the insincere compliments, the ridiculous praise, the extravagant self-laudation on the mutual flattery system. Again, through a din of tongues, and a clattering of plates, I heard the treasurer read those tiresome, endless items, such as—

'Twenty pounds from Lord Foptoddle.' (Cheers.)

'Ten pounds from the Marquis of Cheshire.' (Renewed cheers.)

Again, too, for the twentieth time, I heard the treasurer thank the secretary, and the secretary thank the treasurer; and then, at last, not a little flurried, I rose myself to pro-

pose 'The Ladies,' who smiled upon us in the gallery, I all the time thinking only of pretty little Nelly Pledgett, my doctor's daughter, who I saw beaming and radiant in a front seat. I got quite eloquent on the subject of female beauty, and sat down amid tremendous applause. I was replied to by the good doctor, who, thanking the meeting on behalf of the ladies, begged to propose the health of one of the best friends of the society—need he say he alluded to—'Osbert Wilkinson, Esq.?' (Cheers.)

But suddenly, through all these motley recollections, there flashed a painful thought—a suspicious apprehension of I scarcely knew what coming evil. It seemed, when I think of it now, almost like a presentiment of what shortly after happened. I remembered that, as I sat down, somewhat heated by my speech, and was pouring myself out a glass of that excellent sherry to wind up with, my old friend, the doctor—who by-the-by sat opposite me at dinner—leant across the table and gave me a peculiarly keen and searching look from under those thick grey eyebrows of his.

'What does that detective's look of yours mean, doctor?' said I, pleasantly enough.

'It means that you must take care of yourself,' said he in a grave voice; and no more passed between us, for at that moment I rose to leave, having some business that would call me up early in the morning. He followed me out, though, and when we shook hands in the doorway, I am not sure that he did not hold his stop-watch in one hand, and feel my pulse with the other; but I was so busy helping Nelly on with her scarlet opera cloak that I did not pay much attention to the nervous old fellow, who, between ourselves, I think is rather getting past work; he worries one so with warnings and mysterious threats, as if I wasn't in the finest health, and my life insurance just advantageously settled.

Dear Nelly! what an anxious look she gave me, as I stepped into my cab! I was sure that girl loved me. All this evening I had been

haunted with anxieties about that troublesome Chancery case of mine, 'Wormwood *versus* Widgeott,' the vexation and delays of which had nearly driven me mad. I had really felt quite giddy over it that very morning, and began to get alarmed about overworking my brain, as my doctor taxed me with doing. I could not get the thought of it, even now, out of my mind, till a certain growing apprehension overpowered it.

We were still driving on at a strange, unequal rate—now at a furious gallop, now at a fierce trot; but where we were I could not very well determine—I looked out, for we had just got into a dark by-street, and there was no lamp visible, up or down, as far, at least, as I could see without putting my head out, for the windows were jammed so close that it was impossible to open them.

It was here that, for the first time, I began somehow or other to have some vague apprehension of the sanity or honesty of my driver. Then came thronging into my brain stories I had heard years ago in Paris of a celebrated and dangerous gang of thieves who had for their accomplices many of the drivers of the night *fiacres*. These fellows drove whatever passengers they could procure into obscure streets, and there robbed and sometimes murdered them. Was I to be the victim of such a scheme?—and if I was, what hope had I, alone and unarmed, to escape, at such an hour too, and on such a night?

Now was the time to resist, however, before it was too late. My resolution was prompt. I struck at the window as loudly as I could without breaking the glass; I kicked at the panels of the door; I shouted. Suddenly, with a tremendous jolt on the curb, the cab stopped. As the door opened I cried, 'Let me out, you rascal—I'll not be robbed.' I stepped forward to get out, but was met by a fierce blow on the chest from the cabman, whose eyes now literally glared with rage.

'That's enough of your mad tricks, Bedlam Billy,' he said, as he thrust me back violently into the cab; 'you want a straight vascut,

you do, and you shall have one;' then slamming the door with a wrench that showed extraordinary strength, he leaped on the box, and drove away again with a fury that sent me reeling into a corner of the seat.

Hitherto I had dreamt only of robbery, now I was sure that the man who drove me was mad, stark staring mad. He was going to drive me into some river, or down some pit, or in some way or other to hurry himself and me to a horrible death. There he was now, standing up to drive, leaning forward to lash on the eager horse, that, frothing with pain, leaped at every blow of the man's whip. I do not know why I did not instantly break both front windows, and pull the man off the box; or force open the door and throw myself out; or, breaking all the glass, shout to every one through the openings that the man who was driving me had gone mad.

From whatever cause it happened, I know not, but I did none of these things. It was now long past midnight, and I could see no one, not even a policeman. We were fast getting into the suburbs. The speed rendered it almost certain death to leap out, and, moreover, no strength I could evoke could succeed in forcing open either door. I waited, therefore, for some halt or pause that would give me an opportunity of struggling with the madman to whose care I had so unhappily intrusted myself.

On we flew, on, the horse leaping and plunging as if it would have broken from the harness. We dashed down streets, whose random lamps seemed to race past us; we tore down lanes, where houses were yet but few, except at the beginning. Now the wheels grazed against a post, and now against a garden wall; but still the madman who drove me seemed somehow or other to struggle through all dangers, and drive on more frantically than before.

Once we dashed through a turnpike. Some voices screamed after us, and my driver screamed to them in return, but what they said or what he said I could not distinguish.

What could I do? What use was it to threaten a maniac with violence,

with blows of the fist—a man who perhaps imagined himself hunted by devils, or escaping from his would-be murderer? His crazy suspicions had already, doubtless, associated me with some old persecutor, or supernatural enemy of his. How could I reason with him—how could I sooth such fears? Would he not leap at once at my throat like a wild cat, and tear my very life out?

We were now racing up a long side street, where in the distance, to my horror, I could just discern, through the pale light of the first daybreak, a yawning pit dug for the foundations of new houses. There was no railing on the one side, and the road was a mere deep-rutted lane, without limit or boundary.

I saw at once that our fate was inevitable; it came ere I could in any manner extricate myself from the vehicle. The horse near the deepest place gave a plunge and reel, then dropped, spite of the redoubled lashing of the frantic driver—yes, fell, dragging the carriage with it into what seemed to me, in that imperfect light, and in that whirl of my senses, a chasm of darkness at the bottom of which crouched Death waiting for his prey. There was a crash, a cry, and I fell stunned.

* * * *

I know not how long I lay insensible; but when I recovered, it was daybreak, a faint red light was striping the eastern sky, and I could see surrounding objects, though in a dim uncertain way. I was lying beside the fallen coach and its dead horse: the driver I could nowhere see. My first impulse was to rouse myself, totter on my legs, and discover where I was hurt, or if any bone was broken. To my great delight I found myself whole and sound, with the exception of a slight sprain in my right foot, at least so I thought at first; but as I put down my hand to touch my injured foot, a heavy red-clotted drop of blood fell on it. I lifted my hand to my forehead, and found there a deep cut, from which the blood was oozing thickly. I instantly took out my handkerchief and bound it tightly round the wound, so as, if possible, to staunch

the blood till I could get assistance. But where was I, and where was the driver? 'Thank God,' I cried aloud, 'that I am at last rid of that madman!' I looked round to see what sort of a place the wretch had ensnared me into.

It was an unfinished suburban street, with raw brick skeletons of houses, stretching their frail dreary walls up into the misty morning air. Some were caged in with scaffold-poles, others had great heaps of mortar still piled up in front of them; unfinished iron railings, doors daubed, like clowns' faces, with patches of red; windows with white circles in their panes; gateways with gaping pits where steps were to be, everywhere met my eye. In front of me on a dead wall, 'Alpha Terrace,' the name of this future paradise, was written in staring white-wash letters. The only sound I could hear, far or near, was the restless twitter of the wakening sparrows. I touched the horse; he was dead, cold, and already stiffening. The coach lay on its side, rising like a wall before me, at the bottom of a new-dug foundation, some twelve feet from the roadway. It was wonderful how I had escaped.

But the wretched maniac who would have taken my life, was he lying crushed beneath the cab? I must rouse myself and see if I can find any trace of him, though doubtless he believed me dead. If unhurt, he had fled, howling and exulting, to meet with that certain detection he had not cunning enough to escape; if injured, he had crawled away to obtain help.

As these thoughts passed through my mind, I stepped painfully over the dead horse, and again exclaiming, 'Thank God he is gone!' walked round to the other side of the cab, which hitherto had been hidden from me.

Good heavens! what did I see? My enemy the madman, sitting down between the upturned wheels, with his back against the body of the carriage, quietly cutting a leather trace into two long flexible strips. On his face, which was smeared with mud and gore, there was a hideous smile of malice as his eyes met mine.

'Vy, hallo, Lushington?' he said—not appearing in the least alarmed or surprised, and continuing his task—'this is a rum start of yours, isn't it? Vot are you a-going to give me for my fare? I'm not going away, Colney Hatch, without getting paid for your mad capers, so don't think it, Mr. Hanwell. So now then, Crazy Bill, stump up.'

'It is you who are mad,' I said, 'and I leave you to your keeper.'

'Ve'll see about that,' said the villain, slowly getting on his legs and advancing towards me with the two leather straps, that he had now knotted into one long cord, dangling behind his back. 'You must come off with me to Bedlam, my man; you ain't safe at large; a cold shower-bath is what you want, old Billy Bedlam. Now easy,—hiss!—easy.'

'Lunatic,' I cried, 'beware of a desperate man.'

'There's two on us desperate, as fur as that goes,' said the wretch, leaping on me to bind my hands.

God forgive me for it, but as the fellow advanced, and ere he could seize my throat I drew a long broad knife quickly from my trousers pocket, and stabbed him under the left breast. He threw up his hands, screamed, 'The madman's done it!' and fell dead on his face.

I stood for a moment spellbound, but the sight of a red stream of blood winding towards my feet aroused me. * * I was a murderer; my brain was on fire; those drear gaunt houses seemed dancing round me; the earth seemed heaving into graves.

I erased the number of the cab, 1676, to escape detection, then threw down the knife, and fled I knew not where, with the speed of an escaped malefactor.

I shall never know where I ran. I passed through streets where shops were beginning to be opened in the bright morning sun; people called to me but I never stopped; I leaped over gates and chased through the rank grass of lonely meadows. There was a dead stillness at first in the air, and I thought I had escaped; but presently a sound, at first no louder than the bay of a watch-dog, seemed to gradually swell into the clamour and cry of a vast pursuing

mob. I could hear voices, and the tramp of feet: the wretches had dogs with them: they were tracking me. How strange that among them I seemed to specially distinguish the voices of Doctor Pledgett and his daughter Nelly! What had they to do there? I saw the mob breaking through a distant orchard, and thought I had beaten them off like so many wild curs; but suddenly in front of me, at a turning I cannot avoid, ran three men. They point to a dead, bleeding man lying on the ground. I dash at them. There are blows that fall crashing on my head, then there is a great darkness.

* * *

When I awoke it was a soft spring morning, and I was in bed in a room I had never seen before. Oh, so neat and trim! A goldfinch was singing pleasantly at the window, and there were bouquets of violets on the white cloth of the dressing-table. A bright, rosy cloud rippled over the sky; a cheery fire sent quivering up the chimney its little yellow flames, and made a cozy, murmuring sound with its puffing jets of gas. I rose in bed by a great effort, for I was very weak, and looked at myself in the great toilet glass that faced the bed. I saw not myself, but a pale, hollow-faced, old man, whose shaven head was bound in wet bandages. It looked like Lazarus when he ascended those steps that led from the inner darkness.

Suddenly the door opened, and who should enter but my good friend, Dr. Pledgett? It was his house I was in. He smiled when he saw me once more conscious; but shook his finger when he observed that I was trying to speak.

* * *

The rest may be told in a few words. The long and the short of it was, that I had had a brain fever. The disease had broken out the night of the charity dinner, as my doctor had long expected. The severe mental labour of that case of 'Wormwood v. Widdett' had been too much for my brain. Pledgett had, indeed, as he sat opposite to me at dinner, that eventful night, seen premonitory symptoms of the disorder, and had tried to follow my cab. By my friends' wish I had been sent to his house, for the sake of greater attention.

Of my crazy doings that night, the less said the better. They ended, however, I may mention, in my upsetting the cab myself (for I had insisted on driving), in a dangerous place, and then stabbing the cabman, whom I had mistaken for an escaped madman. Luckily the wound, though it bled severely, had not proved dangerous. As for myself, I had then escaped from the cabman, who had tried to take me safely home seeing I was delirious, and being found in a field near Chiswick, was driven to a hospital, from whence Dr. Pledgett, hearing of my detention there, took me to his own house.

I soon recovered, thanks to my kind doctor, but, alas! having before lost my senses, I now lost my heart. I spent my long days of convalescence in wandering in the garden with Nelly, in practising duets, and reading Tennyson. I soon found it impossible to be happy without her.

To-morrow week, Nelly Pledgett, I am proud and happy to say, becomes Mrs. Osbert Wilkinson, thanks to my imaginary MAD CABMAN and the yellow cab No. 1676.

W. T.

ANSWERS TO MR. HERVEY'S CHARADES IN No. 2.

- I. HUNTING-GROUND.
- II. SNOW-DROP.

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London Societies.

No. I.—SOCIETY FOR THE PRACTICE OF CHORAL SINGING.



OPRANO, contralto, tenor, and bass. Any one who has the honour to belong to a 'Musical Society,' can, I flatter myself, easily distinguish the part nature has allotted the four principal figures of the sketch in the quartett they are performing with such evident satisfaction; but for the sake of any individual not blessed with such advantages, it may be as well to point out 'which is which,' and 'who is who.' First, then, the gentleman at the piano is 'our conductor, manager, and director,' and very proud of him we are, and a horrible life we lead him, especially on Friday evenings from eight to ten, P.M. For my own part, I should scarcely think life worth having under the con-

dition of 'conducting an Amateur Choral Society' to glory (which means the concert at the close of the season). The most delicate tact, the most inexhaustible patience, the most profound art, are *among* the simplest qualifications for that arduous post, especially as, being non-professionals, we naturally feel entitled to give ourselves airs, and take little pains to conceal our disgust when publicly accused of a false note. I am proud to enrol my name among the Bassi, and am represented by the 'party' next to the piano, with his mouth *well* opened. On my left stands our 'first tenor,' and here, perhaps, I should mention that between the 'gentlemen tenors,' and 'the bass,' there is war. No bass with a proper sense of *esprit de corps* will ever acknowledge any tenor can sing a solo without murdering it, or that the tenors, as a mass, are anything but a pitiable failure. To balance this, there exists, I believe, no tenor capable of a more noble sentiment than malignant satisfaction, on the *rare* occasion of a bass coming to grief. This being the case, I avoid the subject of the gentleman on my left, and pass on to the contralto—who is—no, I won't say fat, but plump and good-looking; next to a bass, give me a contralto. How soft, how delicious, how true is such a voice; how gracious, how lovely, how sweet-tempered, is a contralto's face. All are fine women, but some—oh! I need now scarcely say that the tall blonde in the foreground is 'our first

soprano!' She is not an ill-looking girl, and evidently thinks nothing of the upper C; but whilst I acknowledge her astounding ability, the force of her style, and her dazzling execution, I feel thankful, sincerely thankful to the tenor and alto, and both ladies' crinoline, for the space they interpose between us. Sopranos actually swarm at our *réunions*—their name is Legion, and their principal characteristics are grey eyes, pink and white complexions, slender necks (capable of a good deal of muscular action under excitement), and light or auburn hair. I have seen these ladies singing at each other in a full chorus; and I remember my impression at the time has always been, that one or other of the fair creatures must drop dead off her perch. It is in vain our honoured conductor waves his hand and cries beseechingly, 'Piano, pianissimo, ladies!' He—mighty master as he is—can only stand aside, like the rest of us on these occasions, and 'Praise Allah' when the battle comes to an end. Not but that we are all personally very good friends; it is only as a tenor I object to that feeble-looking young gentleman on my left, and I hope it is only as a bass he regards me with, perhaps, merited contempt. As for the ladies, any one passing the door (so kindly left ajar) of their room at the conclusion of our practice, may behold such a scene of kissing and embracing as shall prove their ardent affection for each other to every one except a cynical old bass.

ODE TO THE SWELL.

[*The Bard reciteth his Anthem to the Noble Swell who inspired them.*]

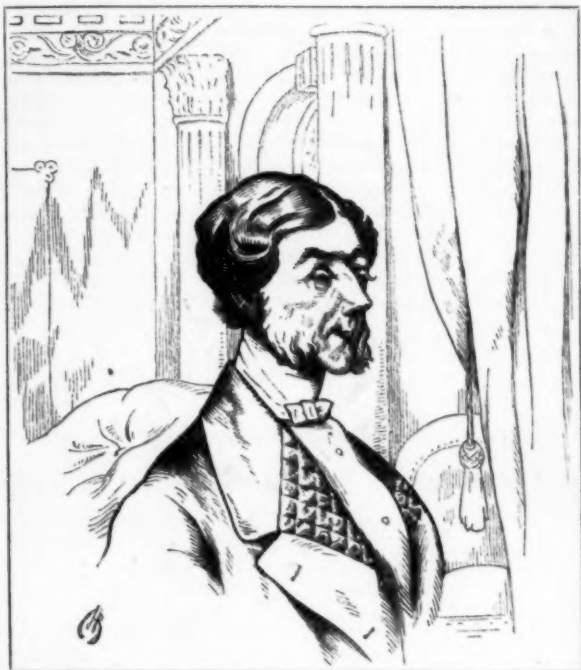
THE Swell—the Swell—I sing the Swell!
 Come, Sisters of the tuneful shell,
 With me your rapturous voices raise
 To celebrate his solemn praise.
 If e'er you spied at Noon and Eve—
 (For Morn his couch ne'er saw him leave)—
 That listless form—that faultless suit,
 The spotless hat—the speckless boot,
 The drooping lid—the rising nose,
 That snuffs at Nature's meaner shows,
 The curling lip—the whisker trim,
 The dainty glove—th' umbrella slim,
 The self-wrapt, world-despising face,
 The lounging figure's studied grace?—
 If e'er you heard in Park or Ball
 The long 'haw-haw'—the languid drawl—
 The softened *n*, whose roughness rude
 To gentle double *v*'s subdued?
 If these you heard—if those you saw—

(*Swell interposing with beseeching accents*),

'I—say!—aw!—this—is—gett'ng—' baw!'

T. Hood.

'THE BEST OF ALL GOOD COMPANY.'



SWELL! Who's the Swell
That our cunning artist has linn'd so well?
Ah! the solemn Swell so fine!
A Clerk, oh, reader mine,
'Neath the Treasury's sway benign.
At Whitehall is he
From eleven till three,
When he cuts the 'shawp' for good company.



Swell! Who's the Swell
With a beard like a lion's tawny fell?
Ah! who is this Swell so fine?
A Soldier, as I opine,
Who can fight—and dance—and dine.
A Major used he
In the Heavies to be;—
He's a heavy Swell in good company!



Swell! Who's the Swell
Who lifts a contemptuous organ of smell?
Ah! who is this Swell so fine?
The Bar, boys, is his line,
Though he does not care there to shine.
Special Pleader is he
In Society,
And he drops the law for good company!



Swell! Who's the Swell
 Whose solemn grandeur no tongue can tell?
 Ah, who is this Swell so fine?
 The Heir of thousands nine,
 Judge of beauty, horses, and wine.
 A loungeur is he
 With a long pedigree,
 And he mixes in very good company!

T. Hood.

THE HOUSE IN PICCADILLY.

A TALE FOR MAIDENS, WIVES, AND WIDOWS; AND, INCIDENTALLY,
FOR ELDERLY GENTLEMEN.

CHAPTER III.

'SAY, GEORGIE! IS IT SO?'

It was the middle of the season, and London was full, and hot, and gay. Both opera-houses were open, and Louisa Pyne on the boards of the one was proving those people mistaken who look down on English opera, and becoming a formidable rival to the Italian prima donna who made melody on the boards of the other. In addition to the new star, who was neither fascinating little Piccolomini nor pretty Patti, dear, stately, handsome Grisi was in London giving her last weeks and last nights, and not having the heart happily to go after all. And Mario, that matchless Don Giovanni, and the golden-throated tenor alternated with each other in charming and ravishing the musical public. And concerts were daily, and exhibitions of pictures of the old and new Italian and Flemish school were many. And the Sydenham Palace was rushing into all kinds of extravagancies in the way of flower-shows, presenting of colours, festivals, concerts, and bazaars. And the debates of the session were interesting enough to excite the members when there, and to send them away to balls and conversations animated and brilliant. And the whitebait had arrived at perfection, and Mr. Hart and Mr. Quartermaine were meeting the constant calls upon them with their accustomed admirable promptitude and energy, when Mrs. Knightly and her family returned to town after their season of sad seclusion and retirement.

Mrs. Knightly was back in the Piccadilly mansion. She had said to Gerald that she should perhaps go and live in Harley Street; and Gerald had told her he thought it would be 'a very good move' and a very proper course to pursue; 'For,' said he, 'when Rupert and Georgie are married you see, mother, they must live here of course, and I don't

approve of the whole family being quartered together.' Gerald's prompt acquiescence in her proposed scheme was not altogether pleasing to Mrs. Knightly.

There was a delightful and select small reception at Mrs. Vining's in May Fair. Mrs. Vining had the prettiest and best-arranged drawing-rooms in London, said her friends, and they were not very far out in their assertion. Anything more conducive to ease and conversation than the ordering of those little rooms, furnished in amber-coloured silk rep, it is impossible to conceive. Every one grew fluent in Mrs. Vining's house. Some people said it was owing to Vining having such good wine; others to the best people always being there; others to the lounges and chairs being freely arranged; but the real cause was to be found in the bright, never-failing vivacity of the host and hostess.

The best people did not mean, in the Vining vocabulary, those with the loudest titles and longest purses, though there were many of these there; for Mrs. Vining was the daughter of a nobleman who, as the song says, 'had been naturally mild, till he found his only child had been bothered and beguiled by an Irish hussar.' Harry Vining was the gayest, and brightest, and best-looking of Irish hussars; and as the father of his wife soon forgave him for having carried off his daughter from wealthier suitors, the pair rapidly succeeded in making the little house in May Fair one of the most attractive in London, and collecting around them at these weekly receptions many a celebrity as well as many an aspirant for honours in literature and art. The time passed at Mrs. Vining's Wednesdays was one sparkle.

Mrs. Vining herself was a pretty

little woman of the very dashing order; but then this manner was tempered by such very high breeding that you never had the fear of its degenerating into fastness. She was the particular friend of that Georgie Clifford of whom mention has been made; and this evening Georgie was here, and Mrs. Vining had been vainly trying to get speech of her for a long time, but had not been able to manage it in consequence of the constant claims on her attention as a polite hostess.

Miss Clifford was just what Georgies nearly always are—very pretty, very piquant, rather small, and rather clever; altogether a very brilliant and very warm-hearted little individual. A universal favourite, courted, and flattered, and openly admired, she was neither a flirt nor a fool. She liked admiration, and she had a great deal of it; but she did not think the finest and most glorious thing in the world was to cause a fellow-creature's heart to ache; consequently, though this admiration very frequently ripened into love, to her honour be it said, it never afterwards changed to hate and contempt. Amongst all the men who had sighed for her love, and sued for her hand, there was not one whom Georgie Clifford could not have claimed as a friend. She had never been guilty of the baseness of telling and boasting about the offers she had received; of meanly trading upon former successes to enhance her value in the eyes of others. No; Georgie Clifford was the soul of honour.

People did not dress much at Mrs. Vining's Wednesdays. Those ladies who went there for the evening went in demi-toilette. There were some who looked in on their way from a dinner-party or to a ball, and these, of course, came resplendent with gleaming shoulders and horticultural heads. But as a rule people did not dress much. And yet surely elegance in demi-toilette is a thing which it costs as much artistic consideration to attain as does the fullest dress. The most critical—and there were many authorities in the critical world of art present—were ready to allow that artistic considerations had

presided at Miss Clifford's toilet on this especial Wednesday evening.

I have called her a pretty girl; but that is an extremely marginal phrase. She was a sparkling brunette; but by this I do not mean that she had sharp black eyes and a vivid complexion. Not at all. Her eyes were not black, and though bright and clear they were very far from being sharp; and her complexion was faulty in the extreme, in the eyes of those who can only admire white foreheads and clearly-defined roseate hues in the cheeks. Georgie's face was of a uniform creamy-brown tint by day, lighting up at night into that dazzling whiteness which is so often seen in Italian faces. She looked sweetly, her friend Mrs. Vining thought, as she stood in the corner balancing her head against the wall, her soft black hair turned back lightly in elastic waves from her pretty little face, and her rounded, graceful figure robed in a high transparent pale-blue dress, with a quantity of rich white lace edging the front of the body and sleeves. She was rather clever, and talked well; and, above all, she had that gorgeous cloak for all deficiencies, an inimitable manner. For about a year and a half she had been betrothed to Rupert Knightly, and it was of Rupert Knightly that Mrs. Vining was so eager to speak this evening.

'Where is Mr. Knightly, Georgie, do you know?' she asked, ruthlessly interrupting a young artist who was imploring Miss Clifford to come to his studio the following day with Mrs. Vining to inspect his novel treatment of the 'Finding the body of Harold.'

'He's in town by this time, I suppose,' she answered. 'He has been at Warmington with his mother for a month; but I believe he's coming back to-day.'

'The whole family came up yesterday, I have just heard; so probably Mr. Knightly will be here directly, as he always can count upon finding you here. I'll drive you to call there to-morrow, Georgie, shall I?'

'Yes do, please; that will be very nice of you.'

'And I tell you what else I will do if it so pleases you. I'll offer to

chaperone Gussie and Florence till such time as either Gussie or you are married and don't want me; for Mrs. Knightly won't go out, and they would sooner go with me than almost any one else, wouldn't they, Georgie?

'Much sooner, I should think. It's a capital idea of yours. I heard from Rupert on Monday. I wonder he did not say they were coming up so soon.'

'Wanted to surprise you probably. I hope he will come to-night,' said Mrs. Vining, turning away from Georgie, after bidding her look for her to-morrow at Kensington Gore at two o'clock, and addressing a gentleman who, in consequence of having overheard their conversation and allusions to some Rupert, was employed in making up his mind not to address those lovely lines of his to 'proud Clifford's daughter' as he had intended.

'Are the Knightlys Mrs. Vining was speaking of the same there was that little buzzing talk about last year, Miss Clifford?' asked a slight, refined-looking, pale, dark man, with a smile that was half a sneer hovering perpetually over his face.

'You ignore my share in the conversation, Colonel Crofton,' replied Miss Clifford. 'Tell me what the little buzzing talk was about, and I will then tell you whether it related to the same family Mrs. Vining and I were speaking of.'

'Miss Clifford places me in the witness-box, and demands the truth—nothing but it—and the whole of it. Here goes then; the talking in question—of which, of course, you are ignorant, how should you be otherwise?—consisted of a series of smart and other sayings, which went the round of the clubs and other gossip-shops last season, relating to the doting folly of the rich Mr. Knightly, who left his sons and daughters penniless in carrying out his fine theory of doing all honour to his wife. Many-tongued report also added—forgive me, Miss Clifford, I'm in the witness-box, you know—that this judicious last will and testament would be the cause of swamping the matrimonial arrangements of the junior members

of the family. That the classical-faced Augusta—'

'Who refused you, Colonel Crofton, two years ago; go on,' interrupted Georgie Clifford.

'Miss Clifford honours me too much by remembering such trifles in connection with me; however, to proceed—that the beautiful Miss Knightly, who, as you kindly remarked, was good enough to refuse me two years ago, will never queen it over society as Lady Tollemache, and that the eldest son—'

'To whom I am engaged, Colonel—allow me to remind you of that fact, which appears to have escaped your memory—'

'Is likely to sue in vain for the hand of Lord Clifford's daughter; say, Georgie, is it so?'

He came nearer to her as he spoke, with his polished easy air, and Vandyke face, and with passionate admiration in his dark half-closed eyes. He came nearer to her, fascinating her into silence by the depth and earnestness of his gaze.

'Say, Georgie, is it so?'

He had asked the question in all seriousness the first time, but the second, a half-smile played about his mouth and eyes, and stung her into speech.

'How dare you put me into such a position, Colonel Crofton? how dare you, after my telling you again to-night, what you well knew before, that I am engaged to Rupert Knightly?'

'Miss Clifford certainly made a statement of a fact with great frankness, about which young ladies are generally more reticent.'

'Because you forced me to it; you obliged me to be either ungenerous to Rupert Knightly, or—unfeminine I suppose you will call it. I prefer being the latter, and bearing the brunt of your sarcasms, Colonel Crofton. Rupert Knightly will have the hand of Lord Clifford's daughter, as you poetically phrased it, whenever it suits Rupert Knightly to claim it.'

'It is you who are sarcastic now, Georgie,—Miss Clifford! Can you imagine no deeper motive than idle curiosity on my part when I asked you that question?'

A quick warm blush overspread Miss Clifford's face as she replied, 'No; for your own sake I am unwilling to believe you had another motive; for you have always professed friendship for Mr. Knightly.'

'Chivalrous notions these, Miss Clifford; however, I accept the rebuke, and now, are we friends again? Though you despise me yourself, perhaps you will allow me to endeavour to create a favourable impression on Miss Florence Knightly?'

'That I do not think you will ever do,' replied Miss Clifford, and as Rupert Knightly then entered the room, she held no further conversation with Colonel Crofton that night.

Colonel Crofton was a man of two or three-and-forty, with a polished, cold, hard exterior, and a handsome though cynical and melancholy face. He was of good family, and, without any ostensible means beyond his pay, always contrived to be in the best society, to have the most unexceptionable chambers—he had retired from active service—and to be the best-mounted and best-dressed man in 'the Row.' He had no very intimate friends; men admired him, did not exactly see through him, and, as a rule, did not like him very much. Women did not understand him, and consequently, as a rule, liked him very much indeed, as they frequently do those whom they do not understand. And Colonel Crofton cared very little whether the generality approved of him or not.

Mrs. Knightly sat with her daughters and her youngest son in the spacious drawing-room, in their handsome house in Piccadilly. The windows were open, and the air came throbbing in laden with the perfume of the flowers with which the balcony abounded. The comely widow had got to the silvery shades of mourning. The heavy crape had given way to the most delicate of pearly tints and thinnest of materials. Her year of strict retirement had not at all attenuated her or robbed her of her bloom. She was a fresher, fairer rose than one could reasonably have expected such a mature one to be. Mrs. Knightly

had on the whole enjoyed herself very much indeed at Warrington. Rupert had never once offered to interfere in anything, and she had liked the steward coming to her, to know what should be done as to everything connected with the land and the tenantry upon it. She had offered to bear the expenses of his election if he would like to come forward for the borough; and this Rupert had declined rather coldly, for he felt that he ought to have been in a different position—in one which would have enabled him to bear the expenses himself. His mother only opened her limpid eyes a little wider at this refusal and manner of Rupert's. Gerald had spoken to her warmly and forcibly, though still gently and affectionately, for this these sons never forgot, about the injustice which had been dealt to Rupert; and he had brought a terrible storm of hysterics about his ears, and sobbing offers to give them everything and go and be a nurse in a hospital or a sister of mercy. This had been too much for Gerald, who resolved that henceforth he would be silent on the subject; but still he steadily refused to have that affair of the exchange arranged.

Augusta was sitting near the open window when the sharp draw-up of wheels attracted her attention; looking up, she exclaimed, 'Here is Georgie Clifford, mamma, with Mrs. Vining!' and presently the visitors were in the room.

Now Georgie Clifford had a keen idea that Rupert was being very badly treated by his mother in this matter of the property, though he had never spoken on the subject to her; but still she really liked Mrs. Knightly, and met her after this long period of non-intercourse as warmly as ever.

The two Knightlys and Georgie were very fond of each other, quite independently of the future sister-in-lawship which was to exist between them; and Gerald believed his brother's betrothed bride to be as perfect in every respect as a woman could be. The majority of the party being so little antagonistic, it is difficult to conceive how the meeting

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could have been other than harmonious; but alas! one of Mrs. Knightly's heart-strings got jarred.

'I am going to propose, Mrs. Knightly,' Mrs. Vining said, in her off-hand way, 'that till Gussie or Georgie can do it, the girls go out with me; and I am ready to begin my duties to-night, by taking one or both of them to the Opera.'

Mrs. Knightly smiled, and said, 'it was very kind, and she was much obliged;' but she felt injured to the very centre of her being. If Mrs. Vining represented general opinion, then general opinion took it for granted that she, the wealthiest and most independent woman in London, was going to shut herself up and have done with pomps and vanities. And by her offer, pretty dashing Mrs. Vining made an enemy on the spot.

CHAPTER IV.

'LOVE TOOK UP THE HARP OF LIFE,
AND SMOTE ON ALL THE CHORDS
WITH MIGHT.'

'You don't mean to go and hear Borghi-Mamo to-night then, Georgie?'

'Not to-night, dear,' replied Miss Clifford, as her friend Mrs. Vining reined up her two handsome bay ponies at the door of Lord Clifford's house in Kensington Gore. 'Not to-night; papa has a dinner-party; and I have some people coming in the evening. Does Harry go with you?'

'No; he has deputed Colonel Crofton to represent him, and bring us safely through the crush.'

'Colonel Crofton? Ah! well, good-bye;' and Miss Clifford walked into her father's house, feeling that she would have given no small sum to have been able to guard Rupert Knightly's youngest sister against the insidious advances of a man of whom she felt so doubtful as she did of Colonel Crofton.

Georgie had no time to seek her father, and tell him the impression her mind had received from this visit to the Knightlys, for she had stayed in the park till late; and when her maid had given the

finishing touch to her costume, and she had descended to the drawing-room, she found most of their guests had arrived.

Rupert Knightly was there; and Georgie was as graceful, pleasing, attentive a hostess as ever: but still her father, who knew by heart every shade and expression of the face of this only cherished daughter of his, saw that something had occurred to give her food for reflection. Lord Clifford was a silver-haired old man of nearly seventy, and a fine type of what he was, an old naval officer. He had just attained post rank when he came most unexpectedly into the title, and then he had married, and seen little service after, so that he had never risen beyond it.

He was very fond of collecting naval men about him, and telling them his old stories, which Georgie knew by heart but never grew tired of listening to, and hearing details of the social life of the service of the present day. This day he would have enjoyed himself particularly, for he had two or three young officers, a lieutenant, and an assistant surgeon amongst them, dining with him, who had been stationed in the Bay of Naples for the last year and a half; and these were full of the Bourbon iniquities (tempered slightly by their admiration for the lovely queen), and of Garibaldi enthusiasm. But that shadow over Georgie's eyes disturbed him; and for once in his life the hospitable old gentleman wished his guests away, that he might learn the cause of it.

He felt sure it was something connected with the Knightlys, for they, too—the father and daughter—had talked it over many times during the last twelvemonth. He had known, from Rupert's manner that a heavy weight was pressing on the young man's heart; but with true delicacy he had never once alluded to a subject that he felt convinced must be so painful to Rupert, determining quietly in his own mind, that if Mrs. Knightly took no steps at the expiration of her year of retirement, he would offer to make Rupert's position

nearly as good, as Lord Clifford's son-in-law, as it ought to have been had he come before the world as Rupert Knightly, Esq., owner of the Hall, and M.P. for Warmingston.

But he had not to wait till their guests dispersed to learn the cause of the cloud in Georgie's eyes, for during a terrific conflict between a young lady and the piano, Georgie came up to him and said, in low tones and with an earnestness that almost amused him—

'Oh, papa! Mrs. Knightly is in grey bèrege and—blushes.'

The father and daughter were eminently sympathetic; and trivial as the phrase appears, Lord Clifford fully understood now why Georgie had looked grave.

Rupert was the last to leave. He had been standing silently for some minutes, till his eyes had caught the reflection of the shadow in Georgie's, and then he looked up frankly into Lord Clifford's face, and said—

'My mother is up in town again, sir: I suppose Georgie has told you; and to-day I have drawn my quarterly allowance. I am nothing, I have nothing, save at her will and pleasure; and under these circumstances I am bound to resign all claim to the hand you promised me a year and a half since.'

His face had grown very white as he spoke, and his eyes inexpressibly sad, but a crimson flood passed over the one and light came back to the other, as Lord Clifford, rising, placed his hand on his shoulder and replied—

'I have no son, Rupert; it will be a small thing to me to settle all I have upon you, considering I have already given you the most valuable thing I possess—the hand of my little Georgie.'

What could Rupert say? It was not a pleasant or an easy matter for him to accept this favour at the hands even of such a true, old friend as Lord Clifford was; but what could he do, knowing, as he well did, how Georgie's happiness was bound up in him? To refuse this offer of her father's would be to abjure *her* hand, to crush her woman's pride, to bitterly mock and wound her woman's love. He had thought to

lay so much at her feet, and now that hope was baffled, and he must occupy the position of the receiver instead of that of the donor, or be cruel in his unrelenting pride and self-respect. There was a fierce struggle for a few moments between his good and evil angel, and then looking into the pleading, anxious eyes of the woman who had given him her heart, 'love was still the lord of all,' and he wrung with grateful warmth the hand of the generous old man, and felt, now that it was removed, what a weight had been on his heart all these months.

'Will you ride with me to-morrow at twelve, Georgie?'

'Yes, Rupert; and, oh! remind me that I have something to tell you—I've no time now, it's so late—about Colonel Crofton. Good night, Rupert; we must not keep papa up any longer.'

But papa stayed up some little time and talked to Georgie about the widow. 'I only wish I could give Gussie what Tollemache understood she was to have, Georgie; but I must take care that this Rupert of yours does not feel what he has lost. Absurd boy, to imagine his mother's folly could make any difference to us.'

'But, papa, isn't it strange—wrong of her? I did think better of her than I do now.'

'My dear child, she's a woman I could never think well or ill of. I liked her when she was powerless, because then her uncontrollable silliness did not affect the peace of any one; now I am afraid she will do a great deal of mild mischief. Those children of hers are every one of them too proud to make her do what is right; and I greatly fear that the girls and Gerald will suffer for it. Sir Francis Tollemache cannot, in justice to his wife and the children she may bring him, marry without a fortune, and a large one too. However, we'll hope for the best; and now go to bed, my pet, and don't let me see you looking sorrowful again.'

'Well, papa, I had cause, for if you had not been what you are—the dearest and best of papas—where should I have been, eh?'

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'I don't think Georgie Clifford is exactly the kind of wife Rupert should have selected,' pensively remarked Mrs. Knightly, when her visitors had departed, and while Georgie's glance of amazement at her pearly tints was still burning into her soul.

'Not the sort of wife? Oh, mamma! where could Rupert, or any one else, find a better, dearer wife than Georgie will be?' answered Augusta.

'Where could Rupert, or any other man, find a purer, truer woman than Georgie Clifford, mother?' put in Gerald, rather hotly. 'A woman more worthy of being the wife of a noble-natured fellow like Rupert does not exist.'

'I didn't mean anything against her truth and purity and goodness,' responded Mrs. Knightly petulantly; 'it's very hard I can't make a remark, without being snapped at by my own children, very hard, indeed. I only meant that I thought, considering all things, Rupert might have done better; and I will repeat, in spite of your both snapping at me so, that Georgie Clifford is too—too—I hardly know what to call it, but not staid and dignified enough for Rupert.'

'Dear mamma,' interposed Florence, 'I think you hardly understand Georgie.'

'Good morning, mother,' said Gerald, rising; 'I am sorry you should do yourself the injustice of affecting to fear that the dignity of the proudest man in the land could suffer through Miss Clifford.'

'Now you are unkind, Gerald,' began Mrs. Knightly, two tiny tears welling up into her eyes.

'Not that, dearest mother,' he answered, lightly stooping down to kiss her; 'but, for heaven's sake, don't test our tempers by disparaging Georgie Clifford.'

Mrs. Knightly immediately protested that she was very fond of her; but when Gerald walked out of the room she could not help repeating that after all she still must think, and perhaps they would allow her to say what she thought, that Georgie Clifford was not the wife for Rupert.

Augusta heard the reassertion in scornful silence—she frequently now received her mother's remarks in this way—but Florence combated the notion warmly, and there was anger and wrath between Mrs. Knightly and her youngest daughter.

Sir Francis Tollemache—a fine, handsome, young, frank-faced man—was waiting to meet them that night at 'Her Majesty's;' and as Augusta's hand lay upon his arm, and Mrs. Vining kept close to him in the excitement of some important communication she was desirous of making, Florence fell to Colonel Crofton's charge, and it was by her side that he took his stand when they entered Mrs. Vining's box.

He had been bending down speaking in soft, under tones to the beautiful younger sister, when raising his head suddenly he met the full, fixed gaze of the elder, of that Miss Knightly, even more beautiful now than then, to whom he had tendered his hand and heart two years before. He returned her gaze as fully and unflinchingly; and a mocking, defiant light burnt in his dark, velvety eyes, and the reflection of a sneer curled his lip for one moment. The next he was bending down, renewing those dulcet whispers which he had judged to be displeasing to Miss Knightly, as being addressed to her sister.

Florence Knightly was lovely enough to have commanded any man's homage; and on this, her first night of reappearance in the London world, she looked extraordinarily so.

Unlike her sister, who had placed jewels on her superbly-beautiful head, Florence had adopted the artifice of extreme simplicity for this occasion. She had robed herself in a high white muslin, with not the smallest bit of colour super-added to brighten up its cold purity, and she had brushed all her fair hair back in a loose, unconstrained mass, and fastened rather low down on the left side—partially against her cheek, partially against the golden hair—a large white rose; this was all there was of ornament about her, and though she looked

very lovely, Mrs. Vining had found an opportunity to whisper her strong disapproval of this beauty-unadorned whim of Floy's into Augusta's ear.

She had known little or nothing of Colonel Crofton before; for his offer to Augusta had been a sudden thing, and he had never been a visitor at their house during her father's lifetime. But now, on this night, whether it was through some few but well-chosen and judicious sentences of praise about Miss Clifford, or because he seemed to know a great deal about Gerald, and could tell her what a favourite he was in his corps—now, after talking with him through the music for some three-quarters of an hour, Florence seemed to know him very well and like him very much. He was acknowledged to be a great critic in matters dramatic and musical, too; and here he was agreeing with her view of things, and complimenting her delicately, in a veiled, irresistible way, upon her true and cultivated taste.

Florence Knightly's heart beat quicker when she heard him tell her sister, while an undercurrent of mournful, manly frankness ran through his tones, that he should do himself the pleasure of calling at — Piccadilly, and renewing the acquaintance which had, so unhappily for him, been interrupted. Almost for the first time in her life Floy felt angry with Gussie, for the latter acquiesced in the proposed scheme of the colonel's with what appeared to Florence repulsive coldness.

Georgie Clifford would be rather late in the field with that warning she was going to give Rupert about Colonel Crofton the next day.

Others had talked through the music, too. Sir Francis Tollemache had found time to let Augusta know that he was tired of this sort of thing, and should wake her mother up to-morrow, and Augusta had entreated him not to ask: 'Wretched as it will be, Frank,' said she, 'if things are all wrong, it will be well for you not to trouble yourself by asking for what may be refused, after all.' And though Frank Tollemache repeated that he should make the attempt to-morrow, he bit the

ends of his tawny moustache with mortification, for Sir Francis Tollemache, rich in ancestry and honour and singleness of heart, was but a poor baronet; and he knew, better than any one could tell him, that he could not marry unless Gussie had her fortune. After this disturbing of the embers of his grievance, the strains of some of the sweetest singers in the world fell harshly on his ears; and standing behind her chair, looking down on the well-loved, beautiful, graceful head of the lady that should have been his bride, his mind began to be filled with some rather uncharitable and unchristian thoughts concerning that lady's father and mother.

Men of that age are invariably more agreeable than younger ones, thought Floy, as the pressure of his hand in farewell was still warm on hers, and the tones of his 'good night; I purpose honouring myself by calling upon you to-morrow, Miss Knightly,' were still ringing in her ears. What a mind he has, and what a voice! and though she mentioned the mind of the gallant colonel first, even to herself, yet it was of the quality of the latter that she thought most.

'That youngest Miss Knightly is handsomer even than her sister, Crofton,' said a man who joined him immediately after he had taken leave of Mrs. Vining and her party. 'There was nothing else so lovely in the house to-night—she's lengths a-head of everyone else.'

'I object to turfy comparisons, Stanley; I think I have told you so before,' answered Colonel Crofton; 'for the rest, I think it very absurd of Miss Knightly to play the "Woman in White" to crowded and fashionable audiences.'

'It suits her style,' said the other, laughing.

'And a very bad style it is that descends to stage tricks to produce effects. Handsomer than her sister? Augusta is sublime.'

'And Florence?' interrupted Stanley.

'Ridiculous; good night.'

Surely Georgie would have felt satisfied that he did not contemplate winning the hand and heart of

Rupert's sister, could she have heard that speech.

For many hours after Florence had pressed the pillow that night, she remained awake thinking over every word, recalling every look, tone, and gesture of the man who had stood by her side during those too quickly fleeting hours. They seemed a great deal to her; but they were in reality trifling enough in matter. Colonel Crofton was not at all the kind of man to give the reins to his tongue and let it carry him on to dangerous ground. He had told her one or two short anecdotes relating to one or two of the vocalists whose strains were ravishing their ears at that present time, and whom he had known at Malta he said—a circumstance which directly caused them to assume a new and far greater interest in Floy's heart, than their glorious talent had procured for them before. And he had hinted disparagement at the taste of those who in vivid colours and gorgeous array surrounded them. Floy made up her mind on the spot to wear 'white muslin and nothing on it,' through all time. And he had declared himself to be getting an old and uncared-for man, who, when he dropped from his humble niche into the grave, would do so unregretted and unmissed; and this had nearly brought the tears into Floy's eyes, as he observed to his intense amusement. He had made some little remarks about Toll-mache too, in a tolerant sort of way, and glanced at him with what seemed to Floy hardly suppressed contempt. She had always been very fond of Frank before, and done full justice to the open, noble nature of her future brother-in-law; but after this speech, and the look down from those grand heights, she found that she herself did not think Frank quite good enough for Gussie.

And what did Colonel Crofton think, when he pressed his downy couch? Was he full of love and reverence for the pure young nature which had been so ready to believe in him? May be so; but the one sentence he muttered before he fell asleep did not look like it. 'If the mother's as weak as I've heard, as

weak as her youngest daughter, indeed, Miss Gussie will repent of the scornful glances she gave me so freely to-night.'

Two years before, Colonel Crofton had really fallen desperately in love, really and truly, with Augusta Knightly. Her proud beauty had made the keen man of the world lose his head for the first time. He would have lost anything to win her; and he had failed. From the day her answer fell cold and clear upon his ear and heart—and she was not a soft, tender woman to the generality of men—he had determined that she should be made to suffer for it. He would have won her brother's plighted bride from him, and then jilted her, to hurt and wound Augusta Knightly. But now, now there was a brighter opening. Her own mother's hand, guided by him, should deal a blow that she should wince under; and Florence, her beautiful sister, should be made the means of throwing dust in their eyes, until everything was settled and he could unmask his battery. The road was fair and clear before him; it would be easy to travel along it; and with this soothing and comforting reflection, Colonel Crofton fell calmly asleep, while Florence, with open eyes and glowing cheeks, dreamt of a nature grand and lofty, of a heart purified and ennobled by some past sorrow, of a wound which she might heal.

I hope they will all like him. I hope mamma, above all, will like him, was one of her last thoughts.

Poor dear Floy, said Augusta to herself that night, that man is very much mistaken if he thinks to win her. Oh dear! I wonder what mamma will say to Frank to-morrow.

CHAPTER V.

'WHAT WONDER IF HE THINKS ME FAIR.'

Mrs. Knightly sat alone in her drawing-room; and how it was that she came to be alone, shall be explained hereafter. She sat alone in what was beginning to seem like wearisome solitude; and the summer wind laden with the breath of flowers—mixed with the odours of

Rimmel's patent vaporiser—sighed past her unheeded. For the fair widow was plunged deep in thought—or what stood her in lieu of it—building castles in the air.

She had come to the business and cares and pleasures of the day in rather an aggrieved frame of mind. For her daughters, in talking over the events of the previous night, though they had dutifully regretted she could not share such delights with them, had done so in a manner that proved that the impossibility of the thing was more vividly before their minds than the melancholiness of it. Mrs. Knightly was not at all the sort of woman calmly to contemplate the idea of being shelved; and she had not been sorry when her dear children withdrew, and she could uninterruptedly cherish her woes within her own breast.

Mrs. Knightly had put on a grey silk this day; a grey silk with some frills and falls of lace about it, in place of the too suggestive crape. And on her head, instead of the plain, simple widow's cap, which her children would have loved to see her wear, she had an arrangement of cloudy tulle and lace, which blended most becomingly with her dusky, soft, brown hair, and delicate complexion. A mild-eyed, kindly, pretty woman she looked—and was—on this fine summer morning, when Colonel Crofton was ushered into her presence.

Now before I go any further, I must devote a few lines to Colonel Crofton, lest injustice should be done him. He is not to be the villain and worthless character of my story, without an end or aim. He was a man who had a slight predilection for doing the right thing, if it did not cost him anything; but he would say, 'Farewell, for a time, to honour,' if the doing so would add anything very considerable to his yearly income. If doing Augusta Knightly a good and friendly turn would have made him master of thirty thousand a year, he would have waived the righteous wrath he had lavished upon her for two years, and have done her that turn and given her his blessing in addition. But as it

was, he saw his way to gaining something like that sum through doing Augusta Knightly the reverse of a kind and friendly turn. He was getting too old to be sentimental, he said to himself, therefore he should take that way.

Mrs. Knightly knew nothing of Colonel Crofton as the rejected suitor for her eldest daughter's hand. Augusta kept such things to herself,—to herself and her brother Rupert, who had of course told Georgie. But she knew he was a rather intimate friend of the Vinings, and a man who had a very good standing in society; and though she had only seen him three or four times previous to her widowhood, something in his manner, as he entered the room and bowed over her hand, impressed her with the idea that she was receiving rather an old friend than otherwise.

'My daughters are out riding,' she explained, in answer to his inquiry as to his companions of the night before. 'Gerald, that's my youngest son, came up and persuaded them to go out, rather against Florence's will, I think, for she does not seem very well this morning; she was rather late, you know, last night—late, at least, considering what a quiet year we've all had.' Mrs. Knightly looked pathetically pensive, and Colonel Crofton called up a fellow expression immediately, though he was mentally smiling in perfect appreciation of Miss Florence Knightly's unwillingness to ride.

'Is Knightly up to-day?' he asked, after a moment. 'What a fine fellow he is, Mrs. Knightly; I never met with a more popular man in a corps than Gerald is in his.'

'He is a fine, handsome boy, and a dear good boy too,' replied the flattered mother; 'he's very much like what his poor dear father was at his age.'

Colonel Crofton did not desire the lady to grow retrospective, especially about Gerald's poor dear father; so he twirled a paper-knife round and said nothing.

'You'll find a likeness of Gerald—likenesses of all my children, in fact—in that album, Colonel Crofton; there's one of me, too,' she continued,

blushing freshly, 'but it was taken before the time of my sad trial; you won't see any likeness now probably. I've altered very much.'

Yes, Colonel Crofton thought to himself, the old lady looks a few degrees more lively now than when this was taken, but he said—

'These things never do justice to ladies, Mrs. Knightly; this is very pleasing, very pretty, but still;—well, at the risk of your feeling offended at the disparagement of your photographer, I must repeat it,—it does not do you justice.'

'So my sons tell me, foolish boys; that one you're looking at now is my eldest daughter; a good one, isn't it?'

'Yes,' Colonel Crofton said, 'a very good one.' If she had been watching his face, she would have seen that it had grown a little paler. It was a double album, and on the opposite page to Augusta there was a likeness of Sir Francis Tollemache.

'And that's Miss Clifford,' she continued, as he turned a leaf or two.

'I wish you were married to him, and off out of the way for a few weeks,' he thought, as he looked at the face which retained its bright, fearless frankness even in a photograph.

'Your son is a lucky man, Mrs. Knightly, unless report errs; this Miss Clifford, for whom I, in common with most people, have a very profound admiration and respect, will soon stand in a somewhat nearer relation to you than she does at present.'

Mrs. Knightly liked Georgie very much as soon as Colonel Crofton praised her.

'Yes, I hope so; a dear girl she is, and so attached to Rupert. I have serious thoughts of giving them Warmington.' It was the first time the idea of making such an alarming sacrifice had entered into her head; but she thought it would look well to show Colonel Crofton that she was as fully alive to the merits of her son's future wife as most people were.

'And this is Tollemache, surely,' said Colonel Crofton, speaking very fast, and turning back to the objec-

tionable page; 'poor Tollemache! I pity that fellow; poverty is bad enough; but poverty and a baronetcy together must be a little too much.'

'Do you mean our Tollemache—Sir Francis Tollemache, Colonel?' asked Mrs. Knightly, eagerly.

'The same; he's unfortunately gone a little fast with that property of his. I heard a year or so ago that he was going to right himself by making a wealthy marriage.'

Mrs. Knightly immediately conjured up a horribly vivid picture of her beloved Augusta in a garret, with three or four ragged children about her, and all her money gone.

'Why, he's engaged to my eldest daughter!' she exclaimed at last.

'Then let my most unfortunate communication be forgotten, madam; let me intreat you not to think more of what I, in my utter ignorance of existing circumstances, have unguardedly said.'

'Not think about it? Indeed I shall think, and speak about it too, Colonel.'

'There's no help for you; you must be frightened into circumspection,' thought Colonel Crofton. So after looking darkly at one moss-rose bud in the carpet for a time, he raised his eyes, fraught with severity, to her face, and said—

'I need not impress upon you, Mrs. Knightly, the absolute necessity there is that my name should not be mixed up in this matter in your communications to your daughter. Should it be so, I can only tell you the results will be probably most awful, most painful for you to contemplate; but I need not tell you this.'—That, said he to himself, has sent her off, thinking of pistols and coffee, and will keep her quiet.

'I must speak to my child, Colonel,' commenced the harassed lady.

'By all means; but you need not mention me; it would at once put a stop to that friendly intercourse which Mrs. Knightly has inspired me with a wish to create between us.'

'Well, I won't, Colonel; and I'm sure you are very polite and kind to say so. But she shall not marry

him. As a parent, I should not be justified. All property has its cares.'

Colonel Crofton had never suffered from the cares which property brought with it; but he agreed with her nevertheless—agreed, that is, with as much of her disjointed speech as he understood. He even went so far as to say that he was convinced she was one who would nobly fulfil all the duties property brought with it.

'But they are very, very onerous, Colonel. Many, many a time have I been tempted to give everything to Rupert. I should have done so, dear fellow, if I had only had my own feelings to consult; but there is Mr. Knightly's last wish to be thought of, and his wish was ever law to me.'

This was a gratifying sentiment from the lips of a woman who had meekly thwarted the most devoted of husbands in every little scheme he had ventured to originate, with admirable perseverance, for six or seven-and-twenty years.

'And most properly so, Mrs. Knightly; it does you the greatest honour.'

Mrs. Knightly began to look upon herself as a woman of a very grand and exalted character.

'Those dear children have all the pleasure of it, as is right, and I have the worry,' continued the blooming martyr. 'My lawyer has been with me this morning; there is always something to be done, and thought about. It's quite fatigued me, but I never shrink from my duties—never.'

Her duties this morning had not been of such an arduous nature as her speech would have led one to suppose. Her lawyer, a sensible old gentleman, who despised the widow of his friend and former client as much as he disliked his will, had been with her for four minutes and a half. He had rapidly read once ten lines, which she could not comprehend, and did not attempt to, and asked her to sign it, which she had done, marvelling the while whether he was struck with the beauty of her hand, the whiteness of which was well set off by the

blackest and widest of mourning rings.

'She's a terrible fool this woman,' thought the colonel; 'I have been here long enough for once; and now I'll be off to the Park, and join Augusta.'

'He's one of the nicest, best-informed men I ever met with,' soliloquised Mrs. Knightly, as she listened to the echo of the firm military strides. 'He's right about that photograph; I'll have another taken. And about Gussie's, too. Oh, dear, dear! what troubles mothers have!'

Georgie Clifford did not think about Colonel Crofton until Rupert and herself had taken a turn or two up and down the Row, when catching sight of the Misses Knightly at some little distance, riding with their youngest brother, she exclaimed—

'Look! there's Gerald and the girls; let us join them, Rupert. Oh! but wait first. I have something to tell you.' And then she told him of that conversation she had held with Colonel Crofton, a night or two before, at Mrs. Vining's.

Rupert had felt rather indifferent about whether Colonel Crofton married his sister or not, as he looked upon him as a very good sort of fellow, until he learned that he had tried to win Georgie from him. The knowledge of that fact altered his views, and caused him to think that it would be very wrong and reprehensible indeed of him to allow Floy to have anything to say to Crofton, if he could help it. By the time Georgie and himself had finished discussing the subject, and put their horses into a canter to join the others, the group had received an addition in the person of Frank Tollemache. Augusta Knightly was a very proud woman; but she was prouder for the man she had given her love to than for herself. In thinking over the determination Frank had come to the night before, she had decided that she would not allow him to run the risk of being humbled by a refusal. She would herself ask her mother to do her the simple justice of giving her without further delay the fortune her father

had told her and Frank should be hers. If her mother refused—which Augusta thought was just possible, and only that—she alone would have been humiliated, not Frank; and it would be far better that it should be so. She had given him her heart, and having done so she could not bear that the least slight should ever be put upon him. In the same way she could not have borne that the least shadow of blame should ever be cast upon him; and if it had been possible for Frank to do anything to pain or wound her, she would still have defended him to the world, and have argued that he was right. So she told him plainly this morning when he joined her that she wouldn't have him speak to mamma on any account; she would rather do it herself; and as Frank was accustomed unhesitatingly to obey all her behests, he gave up the point on which had set his heart, after a short protest.

'Here comes Crofton. What good horses that fellow always has; he's always changing too, but unlike most gentlemen horse-dealers, he doesn't go from bad to worse,' said Gerald, about half an hour after to Georgie Clifford, by whose side he was riding.

'Horse-dealing is his profession, isn't it?' replied Georgie; 'not a very noble one, but still I suppose it pays, as you rarely see him on the same horse twice.'

'They are showy, but nearly all screws,' put in Frank Tollemache. 'I bought one of him last year, gave him rather a long price for him too, and after I had ridden him once or twice the horse went to pieces entirely.'

'You were taken in, in fact, then,' said Georgie.

'Well, something very much like it. He didn't warrant the horse, certainly, but he said he was sound. I ought to have examined him, in-

stead of buying him off-hand, from seeing Crofton on him.'

'It seems to me you are accusing Colonel Crofton of something very like cheating,' said Florence, who had been riding along silently, but with a glowing face, from the time of Gerald's first deservyng Colonel Crofton at the end of the ride nearest to the Piccadilly entrance, where he had reined up to speak to some ladies on foot.

'Something very like it, Floy,' replied her brother Rupert; 'we have even a harsher name for such transactions, of which you ladies are supposed to know nothing.'

'I know one thing,' said Florence, 'and that is, that Colonel Crofton made a very bad deal, as you call it, when he sold a horse to such a reckless rider as Frank.'

Perhaps it was because he had been aspersed, but certainly Floy gave Colonel Crofton a welcome, when he joined them presently, that was more than cordial, and smiles that were more than kind. For once in her life, honest-hearted Georgie had done more harm than good. Rupert and herself soon rode away home, leaving the others in the Park still, and as he assisted her to dismount she said to him, half laughingly—

'I am afraid there's no help for it, Rupert—you'll have him for a brother-in-law.'

'Unfortunately he's just the man to fascinate Floy,' he answered, 'and I'm sorry for it; for I wanted her to do better—in every way.'

Florence meanwhile, bidding adieu to this man at her own door—this man of whom she had heard that beauty had unsuccessfully angled for him for years past—thought 'What wonder if he thinks me fair?' And Florence's mamma, sitting in comfortable proximity to a mirror, thought very much the same thing, though in less poetical language.

(To be continued.)

DRIFTING.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. W. COOPER.

DRIFTING—drifting—drifting away,
Past rapids, and deeps, and shallows;
While gleam and gloom alternate play,
Where the breezes bow the willows;
The flashing drops from the idle oar
Dimple with crescent ringing
The reflex fair, that evermore
On the stream the trees are flinging;
And down in the rushes fringing the shore
You can hear the reed-wren singing,
Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
Into the haze, where dies the day.

Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
 Into the Dreamland shadows;
 Their thoughts through the realms of Fancy stray—
 The young heart's El Dorado!
 They are gazing into each other's eyes,
 All unconscious of persistence,
 (As if to gather what future lies
 In the misty purple distance.)—
 And wish the skiff might their world comprise,
 And the river their existence!
 Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
 Into Hereafter's twilight grey!

Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
Down Thames' and down Thought's stream dropping.
Softly they glide in the sunset's ray,
Nor dream that there comes a stopping!
The charm will break when the boat arrives,
So loiter—little Shallop—and tarry
Here, where the broad-leaved lily thrives:
Dearer than gold the freight you carry—
The happy visions of two young lives,
That the heavens conspire to marry:
Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
On to the dawn of the bridal day!

Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
I, too, would float on the Ferry,
Where your skilful fingers, friend artist, portray
This happy pair in the wherry!
I, too, would glide o'er the glassy wave,
Where the gleaming swifts are winging,—
I long for the dusky willows, and crave
To listen the reed-wren's singing:—
And fain in dear eyes so tender-grave
Would I watch the pure thoughts springing!
Drifting—drifting—drifting away,
I fain would 'be in the same boat' as they!

THOMAS HOOD.

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Drawn by A. W. Carson



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PHILOSOPHY IN SLIPPERS.

On Sickness and Health.

IT was the custom of some nation, or person, or persons, whose name every one except the present writer will no doubt remember, to debate all important matters twice;—once, namely, when drunk, and again when sober.

It was the custom of Mr. Shandy to debate all such matters once in bed, and again when he had resumed the perpendicular.

It is the custom in our day to bestow immense laudation on all manner of compromises. The graceful essayist of 'Fraser' warns us alike off Scylla and Charybdis, and recommends the pendulum for our humble and respectful imitation. He believes (probably) that Mr. Shandy would have found the true solution of all perplexity in an arm-chair; and that the nation, or person, or persons not named above attained true wisdom only at the stage of soda-water. If Thompson says 'Yes' to any question, and Dickson says 'No,' then we are relieved by A. K. H. B., who steps in like a bland *Deus ex machinâ* and assures us that the only correct word is 'Perhaps.'

Now, with all deference to the 'Country Parson' whose recreations are mine also, and everybody's, I think that either Thompson or Dickson is pretty sure to be right;—that in a majority of cases the answer to a question must be 'Yes' or 'No,' and that 'Perhaps' will generally be no answer at all. It is only when the pendulum is at one extreme or the other that it registers time. It never hangs in the half-way except when the clock is stopped.

And having entered this mild protest, I have now to eat humble pie, and confess that I should have strengthened my position much more by acquiescence than by contradiction, inasmuch as my qualification (if I have any) to write upon Sickness and Health unfortunately happens to be that I am neither sick

nor well. I have the misfortune to suffer from a severe cold, and yet nobody but a Saturday Reviewer admits that I am at all an object of pity, or, indeed, far removed from being a nuisance.

I have been thinking how very different from each other would be two essays on this subject which should be produced, the one by a sick man, the other by a man in the vigour of health. The judgment of Silenus and the Arch-Teetotaler himself would scarcely present more curious points of discrepancy. Given, in each instance, precisely the same set of ideas, I think that physical circumstances alone would cause them to be treated in lights so different, that when the pictures came from the brain-camera they would be as the negative and the positive of a photograph: each might be in itself absolutely true, but each not the less would be the exact contrary of the other.

You remember the fine opening of that wonderful essay of Carlyle's entitled 'Characteristics': 'The healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.' And so true is this, that the sick man knows of it also in no way save as a negative quality,—a something—he knows not what—that is denied to him. A man who has been long sick thinks with a sort of blank, incredulous wonder of the manner of life of those who are well. He tries in vain to realize to himself, either by memory or imagination, the feeling of strength in his nerveless arm, lightness in his prostrate body, freedom, vigour,—anything that consists with what he hears called health. He conceives of these things vaguely, as a deaf man conceives of sound, or a blind man of colour. He sees with a strange surprise that those around him who are strong and hearty go about their affairs as if unconscious of their good. They can even eat victuals and think that nothing won-

derful! It seems to him that a man who is well should carry always a face beaming with happiness, radiant with exultation. And, lo! here are people about him surly, cross, petulant, querulous, as if their lot were even like his—an *un*-happy one. They see no blessedness in their lives. 'The healthy know not of their health.'

As little, on the other hand, can the strong man sympathize with the invalid. He who can walk his twenty or thirty miles a day without fatigue—who can carry his twenty-stone sack of barley and scarcely stoop under it—who in each hand can hold half-a-hundred weight at arm's length, has much ado to speak with common patience to him who is exhausted by walking to the bottom of the garden, or who cannot hold the book he reads without a support for it. He regards him as an animal much lower in the scale of creation than his brawny self. He professes, it is true, a sort of pity for him, but that pity, if the truth were told, is nigh akin to contempt. Nay, it was kindly Charles Lamb who insisted that in the bottom of our hearts the feeling of the hale to the ill was that of sheer dislike, and confessed that for his own part he really *hated* sick people. The jest, we know, was but a jest, yet it had, as all good jesting has, no small infusion of truth. Such is, no doubt, the impulse of nature. The herd gores the stricken deer. The barbarian leaves his tribesman to perish in the sun's glare of the disease that consumes him.

Let us thank Heaven that it is but an impulse of *savage* nature; and that the motions which have been given in opposition to it are of the chief of those blessings that have come to us in the train of civilization and Christianity.

For unspeakably dear to the sick are the kind words and unspoken friendliness of those about them. More precious than gold and silver:—making not only sickness less irksome, but health and life itself more valued for their sake. Without these sweet uses of adversity hell were already begun on earth. We, too, should seek out the hidden

thicket: we, too, should turn our faces to the wall, and long to die in our chagrin and despair.

Have you yourself, oh, friendly reader! never lain on the bed of pain,—never counted the weary hours from nauseous draught to nauseous draught,—never watched the dim night-light as it floated and waned with your own dim waning life,—never stood, as it seemed, by the verge of your own open grave? Most of us have had these experiences once at least in a life-time. On your knees, let those of you who have not bow down and thank the Lord in humbleness and fulness of heart, praising him that He has spared you the knowledge which can only so be gained.

Looking out from the sick-room upon the busy world,—hearing its noises in the distance,—reading of its pageants, its amusements, its crimes, joys, traffickings, follies, in the daily sheets, where all is recorded, we seem to have gained a stand-point apart from it all. We are no longer in it, nor of it. We scarcely realize that it is the world that we have moved in,—the world that will move on in the same courses when we and millions like us have found our rest in its bosom.

When we are well again—should the Great Disposer of events so order it—we have as little remembrance of what our sickness was like. But how well we recollect all the little outward signs that attended it! How our worldly books, perhaps, were exchanged for us by a friendly hand, and we took to a kind of reading that was strange to us with extreme disrelish and shame and penitence,—penitence forgotten, it may be, hereafter, but sincere while it lasted. How the child of our brother that was born just then was called by our name, with an unuttered foreboding of an event that came not. How, as the light flickered more and more, the loving tongue spoke to us less of the future, more of the past. How friends whose love had long been proved withheld the question, 'How are you?' when they saw that the answer was irksome to us. How gladly, when the scale seemed turn-

ing, they told us, 'You are looking better to-day.' How mildly they bore with our petulance! How all our faults seemed forgotten—all our little good magnified; and we, who knew ourselves to have been vain and worthless in the world, were made to feel how much we should be mourned and regretted if we left it. Unspeakably precious, I say, is the remembrance of all these things to him who has been sick and is well. And even in the very struggle we feel by these kindly ministrations that the pain of our disease is less to us who bear it than to them who only see it. They groan more than we, because their suffering is greater than ours.

For indeed the difference in degree between the severity of mental pain and that of the body is incalculably in favour of the body. As with dread of disaster and all evil so the terror of pain is more insupportable than the pain itself. No man knows until he is actually grappling with his ailment what degree of suffering he can really bear. Montaigne relates with touching human garrulity how through long years of happy health he had looked forward, with a sight delicate and sensitive, to the approach of a malady to which he knew himself to be subject, until at last the thought of it had become a haunting, unbearable horror to him. Yet when he is actually in conflict with what he calls 'the worst, the most sudden, the most painful, the most mortal, and the most irremediable of all diseases;'—when he has had trial of five or six very long and very painful fits, he writes that even in that estate he finds only what is very well to be endured by a man who has his soul at ease.

'When I am looked upon by my visitors to be in the greatest torment, and that they therefore forbear to trouble me, I often try my own strength and myself set some discourse on foot the most remote I can contrive from my present condition.'

Again he puts, in his own words, precisely that physician's axiom with which Mr. Carlyle himself sets out:—

'We are not so sensible of the most perfect health as we are of the least sickness. Our well-being is only the not being ill.

It is the reason why that sect of philosophers which sets the greatest value upon pleasure has yet fixed it chiefly in unconsciousness of pain. To be freed from ill is the greatest good that man can hope for or desire. As Ennius says—

"Nimium boni est cui nihil est mali."

And herein at least the heathen philosopher and the great sceptic do but agree with the most orthodox and devout of churchmen. For I think the most touching prayer that is contained in our Liturgy,—the prayer that is most thoroughly human, and which is uttered with truest sincerity and earnestness by all classes of men, is that in which we ask, not for length of days or wealth of worldly estate, but simply that 'we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness.' There is no other blessing that we entreat with half so strong desire all our life through. It is, indeed, the chief association in our minds, even with heaven itself, that it is to be a place of eternal rest:—our long life-task will be ended;—our long unrest succeeded by longer rest.

It is this hope—of rest, namely—that sweetens all toil, and is the only true mitigator of that curse which came with 'man's first disobedience and the fruit of that forbidden tree.' No greatest amount of labour, or even punishment, to which we cannot resign ourselves, be there only at the end of it a prospect of rest. The grave itself, most dreaded goal of all mortals, becomes the blissful haven of the woe-worn and broken-hearted. It is the one solace which tyranny could never take from the wretched, that when the end arrived they would all be taken to the breast of their great mother, where neither heat of the sun, nor ache, nor toil, nor any rage of the oppressor should reach the oppressed again. We read in Scripture of its being permitted only once to call from its rest a spirit of the dead; and the first words of that spirit are, 'Why hast thou disquieted me?'

Thinking sometimes of these things—of the longing for rest in life, of the dreaded, certain rest at the end of it, and of the hoped-for

rest beyond, I turn with a shock and a shudder from the contemplation of that everlasting unrest which a sad theology denounces to the unfaithful, but in which kindly Leigh Hunt so firmly refused to believe. And I wish in my heart that I *could* believe in that comforting and comfortable doctrine of purgatory. I think those devout people of the flock of Rome who do believe in it honestly and trustfully must pass their lives more contentedly and hopefully than we sterner-hearted Protestants. To me I confess it would be an unutterable comfort to have faith in gloomy moments that as the tree fell so it *sometimes* might not for ever lie—to be assured that after all was over here my sins and offences might be wiped away even by countless ages of expiation:—the impurities of heart and mind be consumed by purgatorial fire, and I at last forgiven. The human mind does indeed cling to a middle course—yearns for an alternative. Think what a fearful, horrible poem that 'Vision' of Dante's would be did it contain only an *Inferno* and a *Paradiso*. How the *Purgatorio* links together the two extremes and enables us to contemplate both the unsullied brightness and the blackness unredeemed. I think, indeed, it would be hard to find anything grander than this *Purgatorio* in all poetry. Grandest utterance of human penitence and sorrow, brightened and ever brightening by human hope! As in hell we heard nothing but the cry of insatiate ambition,—'Speak of us in the world,' so here we hear only the entreaty, 'Pray for us;' 'Let those who loved us pray for us.' Whether the spirits are fettered and borne along on the wings of the wind: whether they grovel out unnumbered ages on their bellies prone: whether they climb the awful steep bent to the ground with heaviest burdens, it is with this voice that they all speak to him who still casts a shadow. And in this entreaty we see their hope. For every prayer helps them onward and upward, and every step brings nearer the time when for them also the whole mountain shall

shake with joy, and they shall enter on the plains of everlasting rest:—

'The shining table-lands
To which our God himself is moon and sun.'

But I have unconsciously wandered into dreamland and far from my subject, and can get back to it only *per saltum*.

It is a question worthy of no light consideration when we come to reckon up the compensation that is in all things, good and evil—whether is sickness a gain or a loss to a man in the matter of insight into the truth and nature of things?

In the sick-room do we see things more clearly, or only more calmly? Passion and excitement are shut out by that door that turns so noiselessly on its hinges. We have leisure to think on the true relations of much that we have before but glanced at hastily—to estimate the world, its baits and its worries at their real worth—to consider the future, and its awful mysteries, with an open mind. We ask of our consciences many unusual questions, and the low truthful answer reaches us distinctly. But on the other hand, it is by the exaggerative light of memory that we see all things. Practically, we live without a present. Instead of a present there is the ghost of a past recalled to us, and everything is 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.'

Is not the true view of things that which comes with prompt decision in the moment of action, rather than with leisurely reflection after all is over? In the busy press of the world, where each man jostles his neighbour and is jostled himself, where the weaker gives the wall to the stronger, and the race is indeed to the swift, there is no place for the sick. There is the place for the stout arm, the quick eye, the ready hand, the prompt judgment. And are not the opinions we form thus in the heat of the fray, when all is before us with its rough, sharp outline, more likely to be true than those which come with dreamy philosophizing?

Much has been said of old, and much is said yet by some people about the furtherance of religion and morality that is due to sickness.

The body, we are told, is punished, that the soul may amend. Unless our unruly members were scourged and tamed down they would bring all to ruin. As the holy fathers said at the burnings of heretics—'Periissent nisi periissent.'

The sentimental poet writes of the dying baron, who hears the hymn of the nativity, and, touched by it, in his last moments sets free the slaves whose freedom he has withheld all his life. The sentimental reader admires this, and in his own mind canonizes the baron. But I, for one, join with all muscular Christians in refusing to canonize him; would rather, if I must canonize anybody, select him who makes a stream of water flow for the thirsty labourer, or, in his prime of health and life, spends a noble fortune in quiet, unostentatious good works. To deny, indeed, that our chastisements are sent for correction would be to impugn an authority higher than human authority. But, at the same time, let us not forget that it is a very poor morality that owes its existence only to whipping.

A friend of the writer not long ago was maintaining, in discussion with a clergyman, certain views which the latter thought somewhat heretical. He was maintaining them sincerely, earnestly, but with good humour. The clergyman, pushed somewhat closely, had recourse to the *ultima ratio*, and said—'Ah, my young friend! you will come to think differently on these things if ever you lie on a sick-bed.'

The answer was to the point:—'And how far will the sickness that acts on my body to weaken it and prostrate it, act with like effect on my mind? How far are the thoughts of a sick man, when they contradict those which he honestly entertained in health, to be valued—how far themselves to be accounted morbid and unhealthy?'

Truly it is a serious inquiry, and we know not how much the consideration of it might affect the light in which we view many death-bed repentances, conversions, changes of faith, of which we have read. If, as all philosophy tells us, the

soundness and vigour of the mental faculties depend inalienably on those of the body, we should surely rely more on those opinions which we held when all went well with us, than when we were in gloom and despondency, dreading it may be a conflict with the king of terrors.

But even to this question, as to all others, there are two sides. If we insist too much on the dependence of the mental faculties on the bodily, do we not trench dangerously close on the great question—'Is the soul, then, immortal?' For if that by which the soul manifests itself dwindles, and flickers, and grows dim, as the light of life trembles and gutters in the socket;—when the light goes out, does not the light go out?

To answer, 'Yes,' would be to obliterate the guiding star of life itself, and to show how inadequate is reason to grapple with the subject. It is a mystery beyond our depth. Which of us does not learn every night when we sleep, and every morning when we wake, how our souls have been expatiating at large while we slept? Our bodies have lain dumb, motionless, insentient. The mysterious tenant has roamed round the world, and into worlds we know not of—has burst all the bonds of time and space—has talked with its fellows,

'Spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost;—'

with the spirits of the dead, and the ghosts, it may be, of the unborn: and now it is here again, and answers to our summons.

Suppose that we had waked no more, but gone on sleeping eternally, would the dream have continued also?—or would the spirit have come again, uncalled, and slept with us?

Suppose that this long disease, which we call life, is suddenly cured by the remedy of death, shall the spirit not be the better for it also, and be free thenceforth? Yes!—'It is written,' Well for our faith and hope that we have the Divine assurance to still the soul's alarm.

R. H.

ANGLO-ROMAN LIFE.

FROM how many points of view have authors looked on Rome? Into what various phases of discussion has that fruitful subject passed? Who could reckon the volumes which it has filled, from Titus Livy's *Decades* to M. About's satirical pamphlet? Is there among its numerous treasures a single monument unmeasured, or notable picture unengraved? Didn't we learn all its history at school, from Romulus to Constantine, and from Constantine to Rienzi, including all those useful facts and figures, some of which (for instance, the origin of the second Punic War and the date of Valentinian's birthday) I never can recollect when I want them? Have we not all pictured to ourselves her deserted Forum, the great dome which Buonarrotti raised, the stately Vatican, and the gloomy Campagna? We have all heard more or less of that famous city—the Easter ceremonies—the glories of the Vatican—the gloom of the catacombs—the faithful bending over the papal toe, and a hundred other characteristic scenes are familiar to many who have never even crossed the Channel. I knew the dear venerable old rookery long before I visited it, and walked straight out of my hotel down to the Coliseum the morning after my arrival. I have seen many cities on this and the other side of the Alps, but I know none with which a man can become so suddenly familiar as Rome—none which, revisited, seem to greet you so like an old friend as you walk over its rugged pavement through streets which are as interesting, as picturesque, and as dirty as they were—how long shall I say ago?

When my friend Trotman of Corpus travelled with me at mid-winter from Florence to Rome I could not help admiring the assiduity with which he dotted down a record in his diary of all trifling incidents which occurred on the road, and a description of every little village through which we passed. I have often thought since that if any respectable publisher could be in-

duced to accept his MS. a great many useful statistics might be obtained. For instance, there is the notice of

'Pietra Dura. Pop. 20914. Inn: the "Columba Spiumata"—a dismal and dirty auberge. There is another in the town, viz., the "Agnello Tonso," said to be rather worse. Mortality so and so: average of births in the year, about the same. Situate in the midst of a fertile, though not healthy country. Although the name of Pietra Dura is associated with the horrible orgies of the French Revolution, the inhabitants most indignantly disclaim the disgrace of being the inventors of the too celebrated "Raschia di Naso," the instrument of so many brutalities, &c. Here was born in 1390 the great condottiere Pietro Briccone (the son of a poor herdsman), who became so celebrated under the sobriquet derived from his birthplace. He began his career in the service of Filippo Maria Cervelli d'Agnello, Grand Duke of Malatesta, and rapidly rising in power, &c., &c., &c., or,

'Salsiccia Maggiore, a large and flourishing borgo, formerly fortified, but there is now scarcely a vestige of its two castles and the lofty walls which once surrounded it. The Duomo, or cathedral of Salsiccia, is the ancient sanctuary of the Madonna del Bosco, but it offers nothing remarkable beyond its historical interest. Salsiccia is a place of some importance in the history of art, being the birthplace of Zaccherante—a painter who flourished towards the end of the sixteenth century, and whose works have been sometimes confounded with those of Paolo Verniciatore the celebrated,' &c.

'In the baptistery is still shown (not more than thirteen francs should be given to the sacristan) a portion of the toe-nail of St. Dunstan, said to have been disengaged from his foot while the holy father was in the act of kicking a certain, &c., &c., &c., and presented by King Edward of England to the chief abbot of Salsiccia with the following witty,' &c., &c.

If I do not in these pages quote more from Mr. Trotman's itinerary, the style of which the reader will observe closely resembles that of a certain popular Handbook, it is from no want of appreciation of his labours, but rather because my recollections of that hibernal journey are not of the most agreeable kind.

The fact is, that delightful and exhilarating as all tourists find vetturino travelling to be at the outset, I am free to confess that after a few days' continuance it does become rather a bore. True, there is a novelty, and so far a charm, in being awakened at 5 A.M. on a cold November morning. The process of shaving at that hour by candle-light, if your razor is not exactly in good order, is certainly trying to a person whose nerves, naturally irritable, have been rendered more so by the nocturnal attacks of the 'Pulex domesticus.' Still it is a change in your habits of life which Dr. Gibb may recommend, and this is some consolation; but the exercise repeated for some days together grows rather irksome.

At first, indeed, the delightful scenery on the road, the charmingly primitive manners of the rustics, the homely accommodation at the inns where you alight, the quality of the viands produced at your request, and the amusingly disproportionate amount of remuneration charged for your entertainment, are all so many matters of novelty to the travelling British subject, and I have known them keep many a *blasé* youth in spirits for some days; but unfortunately men are for the most part restless, discontented beings. The charm of picturesque landscape does not last for ever. Even snow-capped mountains and fair river banks pall upon you after a time. You cannot always be looking, for instance, at Swiss cottages and subjects of goitre. I defy any one to keep up an unflagging interest in glaciers; and no reasonable tourist cares to inspect more than twenty churches in a week. So that after you have heard the honest vetturino sing his morning hymn and leave off to curse his horses a few dozen times—after you have list-

ened to the bells jingling on those quadrupeds daily for eight or ten hours at a tension, you begin to fall back on your friend—I mean, of course, figuratively—and your pipe for entertainment, and become rather inquisitive as to the precise time when you are to reach your destination.

Such, I admit, was the case with me, who am an old traveller, after we had left Florence by a zigzag route, and visited a dozen places of varied interest which I will not now describe. As for Mr. Trotman, he too began to lose his temper at last when Paolo, our vetturino, used to knock him up remorselessly at half-past four in the morning, on which occasions he used to descend the stairs thirty minutes afterwards exceedingly wrathful. Then woe to the wretched waiter if the coffee was not hot, or if the butter (as was not unfrequently the case) tasted like incomplete cheese. The slippered *chef* used to tremble before him, and I feel convinced on more than one occasion charged fifty per cent. in the bill as compensation for his trouble. So we are not sorry one morning when Paolo tells us that he is to perform the last stage to-day; and about 5 o'clock P.M. we are rumbling along a dusty highway on a level plain of scanty herbage, now and then passing quickly by some stately ruin—a gaunt and crumbling mass of ivy-covered brick, or the fragments of a shattered tomb, on which gray ground the lichen shines in the setting sun like gold, when suddenly a turn in the road discloses a far-distant view of wooded hills, where stone pines and cypresses stand in clear yet tender outline against the crimson sky, and from the plain below a tiny vault uprises, purple in the evening light. There is a short-lived sparkle on its crest as the last ray disappears.

'Ecco! San Pietro!' cries the driver, as he uncovers his head.

Yes; this is Rome!

The authors and authoresses of ingenious little manuals, viz., 'Rome seen in Eight-and-forty Hours,' 'A Week in the Eternal City,' 'A Sojourn in New Babylon,' &c., &c., do not fail to tell us, in their various

compilations, of the different points of view from which we may best enjoy a general survey of this wonderful city. One writer insists on your climbing the tower of the Capitol before breakfast the morning after arrival. Another advises you to rush to the gardens of St. Onofrio to enjoy the prospect. A third declares that the panorama is nowhere so fine as from the Pincian Hill. And, in short, if you followed all their different counsels, you might be running up and down stairs, and ascending and descending hills, from morning to night; but the truth is that the real aspects of the place are much more varied.

Our countrymen and countrywomen swarm in Rome every winter, and most of them 'do' the sights, to be sure, in common. It is respectable; and if you return to England and your friends say, 'Why—didn't you see the beasts blessed?' and you say, 'No. Bless the beasts!' (or something naughtier), they stare and think you monstrous apathetic. But if all 'Britishers,' who pervade the Piazza di Spagna came solely to see the Coliseum by moonlight, and the Pope distribute the palms, what a dreary winter we should have in Rome! No: the motives which induce them to exchange their comfortable firesides in beloved England for a suite of dingy rooms in the Corso are more than this, and numerous in their kind.

You are perhaps an antiquary, and you come armed with Nibby and Niebuhr; or an architect, and you bring your T square and five-foot rod; or a painter, and you immediately get a studio and look out for a variegated contadina—a retired herdsman, or an amateur brigand, according to taste, and all of whom may be hired at the moderate rate of one scudo per day, as they lounge about awaiting your orders on the steps of the Piazza; or you come fresh from Oxford, full of ecclesiastical sentiment, to make heel-ball rubbings of all the monumental inscriptions in the Vatican; or you are a speculative mamma, with an eligible daughter; or a botanist in search of plants; or a gentleman whose tastes have been too exten-

sive for your means, and prefer Rome to Bologna as being more respectable; or you have lately retired from business and wish to show mamma and the dear girls the carnival (which they have always longed to see); or you are a dashing young warrior, with impressive whiskers, on furlough, and have heard that *she* will be in Rome this winter; or you are an enterprising young author, and wish to write the four thousand nine hundred and ninety-ninth description of Rome and its environs.

These and fifty other reasons might be assigned for that annual flocking of our Islanders to the Eternal City, which occasions such unparalleled success to the profession of landlord and hotel-keeper, and which causes the honest English face to be so familiar in every street; from the Campo Vaccino to the Vatican.

We soon established our bachelors' quarters in the Piazza Barberini, where my bed-room window commanded a full view of the celebrated Triton (that unique invention of the ingenious Bernini), squirting water through a conch with no other apparent motive than that of irrigating the vegetation on his own shoulders. On the first morning after our arrival Mr. Trotman posted off to the Piazza di Spagna to consult Pellegrini's register of visitors, where also he entered both our names and addresses with great solemnity. There is something to me very awful, by the way, in your English shops abroad. They wear an air of severe respectability, which becomes all the more severe by contrast with their humbler neighbours. They seem to say to one, 'Remember this is an English shop, and here are none but English goods. Don't forget that you are an Englishman. If you come in here, in a swaggering English way, with a perfectly English air of English superiority, and ask for the best English articles, you may have them at the highest English prices, which you will be expected to pay with the utmost English indifference; but unless you are prepared to furnish these proofs of your English birth and education, don't

presume to come into English shops; you can be no true Englishman, or no rich one which is (on the Continent) the same thing.

The Anglo-Romans may be generally classed under two heads:

1. Residents, chiefly professional, and engaged either in their studios, shops, and counting-houses, or giving lessons in the Italian language, singing, painting, &c. &c., or else devoted to the study of Galignani, and the art of smoking, which they practise daily with great assiduity in the Caffè Hellenico.

2ndly. Non-residents, or perhaps, I should say, visitors who patronize the above—buy their pictures—take their lessons, or swallow their prescriptions, as the case may be, and who, it must be confessed, work much harder than the majority of residents, since they rush about in their carriages or on foot from morning to night, 'doing' and seeing everything that is to be seen and done, from the Coliseum to a cricket-match—from the Tavola degli Apostoli, down to a domestic tea-fight.

These may be subdivided, again, into many minor classes; as, for instance, the lady-amateurs, who are devoted to the fine arts, make sketches of the Arch of Titus by moonlight, and bribe young Pifferari (the dear picturesque little darling) with twice their usual fee to sit to them for water-colour portraits with pencil backgrounds, and are horrified at symptoms of fleas afterwards: the intellectual young persons who read Gibbon steadily, and are perpetually flooring you by alluding to the Catiline conspiracy—asking you if you remember the effect of the First Agrarian law, or what you think, on the whole, of the character of Calpurnius Piso—the enthusiastic old ladies who insist on ascending the tower of the Capitol, getting up into the ball at St. Peter's, mounting the Tarpeian Rock, the roof of the Pantheon, the top of the obelisks, or other equally airy but dangerous situations—the people who give parties and the 'parties' who go to them.

The artists in Rome are a tribe by themselves; and though they are found there in all society, their

house of call is the Caffè Hellenico. There is a trattoria next door, where you may regale yourself on testiccioli, frittata, rosbiffe, macaroni, zuppa Inglese, and other national delicacies. I brought away a tremendous bill of fare from this famous restaurant, which I show now to my friends in England as a curiosity in culinary literature. It contains several hundred dishes, and I confess I had at one time the temerity to believe that by ordering two or three of them every day, I should at last become conversant with all. These experiments did, however, not always answer, for on one occasion, having selected a 'plat,' with a high sounding title as a *pièce de résistance*, I found it to be nothing more than a biscuit, and was fain for the future to stick to the traditional viands. Zuppa Inglese, by the way, which most Englishmen believe to be mutton-broth, turned out to be a sponge-cake steeped in wine; and I have no doubt that if one ordered plum-pudding they would serve it in a tureen.

The process of dining at a Roman trattoria is rather complicated than agreeable. You enter and take your seat, that is, if you escape being knocked down by one of the waiters who are perpetually running about to get something, but by some ingenious policy of waiter-craft never bringing it, (and note that Italian waiters have a peculiar habit of walking on their heels which, if you happen to be drinking at the time, may cause the glass to vibrate on your incisors in a manner which is not pleasant). However, supposing you are seated and ready for action, you call out—'Pst!' 'Cameriere!' 'Hi!' 'Garçon!' or whatever ejaculation you may be accustomed to use on such occasions.

Waiter answers, 'Sì, s'gnor!' hurriedly, and then exits.

Now don't be foolish and get angry at this, because that sort of thing doesn't do here. You may realize the situation of the Irish gentleman who, the more he shouted for his domestics the more they didn't come. No; take up the Galignani and read Gladstone's last

speech, or a critique on the new opera; but don't hope for the waiter's attention under twenty minutes. At the end of that time you may call him again.

'Cameriere!

'Si, s'gnor — pronto — momento, s'gnor!' (Exit again but reappears.)

Now ask for the bill of fare, which he will bring you, and while you are perusing it, he is off again. Never mind; you read over the various dishes under the grand divisions of 'bolliti,' 'umidi,' 'fritti,' and 'pasticceria.'

Perhaps, retaining your English prejudices, you select 'bistecca.' You order it, and away goes the waiter once more on his heels. You wait another twenty minutes, during which interval you are the subject of much amusement to certain facetious Italian 'gents' who, lest their wit should not render them sufficiently formidable, keep their hats on and are additionally armed with eye-glasses and toothpicks. At last in stumps the waiter with a dish. You hail him with delight, but find that the refection he carries is for eyeglass No. 1, not for you. You ask him where your dinner is, and he (the waiter) politely asks you in return what you ordered. On appealing to his memory and better feelings, he exclaims:

'Bistecca! ah mi dispiace, s'gnor, NON C'E'!

There is none it appears, and you tell him in a great rage to bring the first thing that is ready. Away he scuds and comes back this time (to do him justice) in less than a quarter of an hour, bringing you at last your dinner—a lump of hard, indigestible something without gravy or any evidence of the cooking art. Whether it be beef, or kid, or mutton, or porcupine, or pony, or doormat is more than you can tell. I am sure I couldn't, and I have had some experience.

It was after rising from a banquet of this description that Trotman and I dive down a little dark passage in the Via Condotti, and arrive at a glass door which, swinging open as we push it, admits us into a room, or rather two or three sections of rooms, lighted with gas,

close, ill ventilated, dingy, and—but for the humanity assembled in them—cheerless. The smoke is so dense, that at first we can see nothing but the lighted ends of cigars which shine through it. In the mean time we hear a Babel of voices chattering French, Italian, German, and our beloved mother tongue, and presently some one shouts out in awfully hoarse accents, drowning every other sound, the following imprecation:

'N Kffinaaay! tray beceeraaaaar!'

Presently, through the smoke, we begin gradually to distinguish noses, beards, and wide-awakes, and at last identify their owners. Artists of every grade and nation fill the place, from Vandyke Brown, the well-known classical, allegorical, historical, mythological painter, 'R.A.,' 'R.B.,' 'R.C.,' &c., &c., down to honest Karl Schmutzig, who will draw your portrait for a dinner and a glass of schnaps. Here, too, you may see the celebrated Siberian artist, Herr Von Lang Weilig, who has been occupied forty-three years in painting the largest oil picture ever known, the studies for which alone occupied seven years in preparation. Three houses were pulled down to make room for the studio, and no one knows how many artificers were employed to prepare the canvas. The picture is expected to be finished by his grandson, who is being educated for that purpose, and on whom the Czar will entail the annuity. By his side sits Daubney Glaze, the fashionable London portrait painter, who will knock off your head at a single sitting for the moderate charge of one hundred guineas.

Then on the right hand please to observe Tom Chippenham, sculptor, statuary, and modeller to the trade.*

There on the left, you may see

* The English nobility and gentry residing in Rome, are respectfully informed that T. C. has lately lowered his charge for portrait-busts, in consequence of a reduction in the price of marble. For terms see advertisement. N.B. Copies of Canova's works and the antique examples neatly executed. Cinque-cento chimney pieces on the shortest notice.

Dronemore of Dronemore's Town, Tipperary, commonly called Lord Chatterton, whom nothing but the grossest Saxon injustice keeps from his enjoyment of his title and the estates. He will tell you in one evening more particulars of his birth and pedigree, and more anecdotes of the great people whom he has met than you need ever hope to remember, or are likely to believe. He gives lessons in Italian and French, both of which languages he speaks with equal indifference. His notions of the proprieties of English dress and manners are modelled after those of his deceased Majesty King George the Fourth, in whose august reign Dronemore left his native soil. He has lived in Italy a quarter of a century and has not yet seen a railway. Bless his proxy face for the most perfect gentleman, and the greatest muff in Rome. Yes! here they are. Artists, authors, wits, good, bad, and indifferent, consuming muddy coffee, watery beer, and halfpenny cigars. Here we are at last in the great artistic rendezvous of the most famous city in the world. Walk in, gentlemen, and take your seats. This is the Caffè Hellenico.

The honest reader of these pages, if his patience has carried him on thus far, will have rightly inferred that I belong to the honourable confraternity of limners, and that my business in Rome was the study of my profession. It is a venerable tradition which induces young painters still to haunt that ancient stronghold of art; but the days have gone by when a residence in the Eternal City was sufficient to constitute a genius. Modern tyros come to look at the old masters—not to copy them. The great school of nature, however, remains for all. A Roman brunette is as fine a model now as she was some fifty years ago; and wondrous specimens of that type I saw during the Carnival, which took place some few days after my arrival.

Until that important festivity is concluded all attempts at work are vain. While it lasts the whole city is in such excitement that the old Anglo-Roman stagers, for whom the

affair has lost its charm, gladly escape to Tivoli, or some other quiet retreat, till all the noise, and masking, and bustle is over—till the last *moccolo* is blown out, and the once-blooming bouquets have fallen, trampled on and forgotten, to the ground.

Yet, with these exceptions, the Carnival in Rome is becoming as essentially British an institution as if the whole ceremony took place in Oxford Street, as if Mr. Nathan supplied the masks, as if the carriages came out of Long Acre, and the bouquets from Covent Garden. Keep the English visitors from Rome, and the Carnival would be a slow affair, indeed.

For my part, I confess that I was contented with a few hours of the amusement; whereas most of our enthusiastic fellow-countrymen devote a whole week to the pastime, and would as soon think of missing an afternoon in the Corso, as a Sunday at the English church. Indeed, many of them go through both ceremonies with equal and becoming gravity.

At two o'clock, then, in the afternoon, there is a muster of cavalry in the Piazza di Spagna; and here, parenthetically, I cannot help reflecting what a gratifying fact it must be to the Romans of the nineteenth century to find even their amusements always graced by the presence of foreign troops—a compliment which, no doubt, they are the more ready to appreciate from the well-known forbearance and modest deportment of the soldiery in question, as well in circumstances of private life as in their professional capacity.

The ceremonies being thus inaugurated, private carriages enter the Corso in a long 'queue.' There you may recognize the state coach of the Dowager Duchess of Villaricos los Terreros, with her illustrious suite, followed by the humble gig of an honest *contadino*. Lady Crushingham Grandling, in an elegant open barouche, in close proximity to the plebeian trap hired by Mr. Chippenham and his beery friends. Behind those gentlemen, in a splendid mail phaeton, drawn by four horses

profusely decorated with coloured ribbons, you distinguish my Lord Raikesmere, Captain Sympring, of the 'Light Bobs,' and Mr. Adolphus Stalker (late of the Civil Service). These illustrious youths are well armed with flesh-coloured wire masks, chastely painted in front in imitation of the human face, and are additionally provided with brown holland blouses bound with green and blue ribbon. Beside their august persons the vehicle contains two large hamper of bouquets and a bushel of confetti (comfits, alas! no longer, but vile lumps of plaster of Paris, to be shovelled out in handfuls). Then follow several native cabs, with about thirteen Romans of both sexes in each. The whole party are in gorgeous array, with second-hand dominoes and cheap finery. Halfpenny bouquets are thrown from these seedy vehicles, which in return receive a merciless shower of confetti from the windows, until the drivers look like amateur millers and the rest of the company resemble animated floursacks. Mrs. McTinsel's chariot is next on the rank. Her husband, a 'fat Adonis of fifty,' has been with difficulty persuaded to hide the symmetry of his form under a blouse. He is just putting himself in attitude to pass a balcony full of ladies, when he receives a stout bunch of evergreens in his eye, and retires ignominiously to his seat. The Gräfin von Schlüpfenschleiden, with his Excellency the Baron Blauenstrumpf, and Lang Weilig, the Siberian artist, occupy a drosky behind.

And now the fun of the day fairly begins. From a hundred windows gay-coloured cloths and carpets hang glittering in the sun, and from twice ten hundred windows lean shouting a mirthful host, while I am battling my way on foot towards the Palazzo di Venezia. And no easy matter that, while every one in this vast crowd is pushing, jostling, and scrambling to throw his bouquet and then get out of the way of the next carriage as quick as he can. The 'gamins' of Rome run fearful risks of being trampled to death as they hastily pick up the ill-aimed bouquets (which fall back from the

balconies) to re-sell. There is a little urchin of eight years old chasing one as it rolls under a carriage. Another instant and the horse trots on. You think the poor boy must be crushed this time; but see—before you can take breath he is off and away to the other end of the Corso, where he will make a franc by the transaction.

Presently comes rushing on a noisy troop of 'prentices. Each has a bladder, tied by string to a stick, and—whack comes one of these on your devoted head—rather startling certainly, but—*Que voulez-vous?* It didn't hurt, and it is Carnival time. Here is a lady six feet high at least, with a crinoline which reaches nearly across the street. This damsel's hands are somewhat larger and redder than usual, and as one of them smartly descends on the shoulder of a boy who stands in the way, we begin to have some doubts about her sex. Ah! now she is defending herself right lustily. One, two—that's right—give it to them. The honest fellow's bonnet has fallen off, and he is hitting out right and left to regain it.

On we go, pushing, shouting, scrambling, pelting. I recognize a fair compatriot at her balcony, and, after aiming five bouquets at her unsuccessfully, am obliged to retreat under a heavy fire of comfits. Again the carriages pass on—again our aristocratic friends appear, this time mixing with the vulgar herd, and enjoying themselves with true British energy. Raikesmere is particularly active. I call to mind old days, when his lordship and I shinned each other (as the phrase was) at football in the green at Eastminster, and wonder whether he recollects it too. Even Sympring seems to forget his gentlemanlike apathy in the general *mêlée*. 'Doosid good fun this is,' he says to his companions. Well for him if all his pleasures are as harmless.

Presently—boom goes the gun in the Piazza, and immediately the carriages file off right and left. Most of their occupants rush back to the Corso, and reappear at balconies which have been reserved for their especial use. For three quarters of an hour longer the honest folks go

on peppering each other with confetti and flinging bouquets, the best of which, originally costing five or six pauls apiece, may now be bought for a few baiocchi. Still more pushing, hustling, and scrambling. I come up to poor Chippenham (who stands about fifty-nine inches in his bluchers). 'Jolly this, ain't it?' cries the little sculptor; 'I've just hit an old party up there between the barnacles, and he's so riled, instead of taking it good-naturedly, as he *ort*.' While he is exulting over the successful shot, a huge bon-bon alights on his own proboscis, and off goes our little Buonarrotti muttering his wrath.

Suddenly there is commotion in the crowd, and far off, up the long, long street, you may notice it dividing, like the Red Sea: the great waves of human life roll back on either side. There is a bloodless charge of cavalry. They begin with a trot, which grows into a canter, then a gallop, and presently they dash by us at an awful rate, their sabres and cuirasses gleaming in the sun. The crowd closes in immediately behind them, and is again in confusion. But when this ceremony has been performed twice, foot soldiers line the trottoirs, and the course is cleared in earnest for the horse-mee.

There is a breathless pause.

'Ecco—Vengono!' cries some one, and we all press forward to look. It is a wretched dog yelping and frightened to death by the shouts and laughter of the people. Away he goes with his tail between his legs, and is lost in the distance.

Two minutes more of suspense, and a sharp clatter is heard. Here they come, and no mistake. 'Where, where?' 'Here!' 'There!' GONE!

I declare and vow all I saw of the race was a horse's tail, three hoofs, some tinsel, and a good many sparks of fire. The race is over.

If any gentleman should feel inclined to read over the above description five times, he may have some slight notion of what it is to 'do' a week of the Carnival, and we may be supposed to have arrived at the last night, when itinerant and amateur

chandlers are rushing about selling little wax tapers at about thrice their usual cost, and according to a time-honoured custom, we are all lighting up as many as we can hold at a time. We are about to consummate the festivities of the week by the intensely amusing sport of blowing out every neighbour's candle that we can reach, and then rekindling our own, which in the mean time, of course, has shared a similar fate. The whole street is blazing with a fitful flickering light from the trottoir, from the kennel, in the porches, or the balconies, flashing now across fair faces and making bright eyes brighter still or throwing deep and ugly shadows on some scowling brow below.

The carriages return to the Corso. Confusion recommences, and under cover of it, a good deal of boisterous flirting goes on. The ladies are especially busy, and perhaps may kindle many a flame to-night while they are extinguishing another.

Ah! *carne vale; carpe diem*. Tomorrow we shall be in sackcloth and ashes, and then—

Just as I am about to philosophize, I hear a vigorous puff behind, and whizz! out goes my light. 'Senza moccòlo, senza moccòloooo!' roars my victorious assailant, and disappears somewhere in the crowd.

'Senza moccòlo! sen—zamac—colo!' is now so wildly shouted on all sides, that the words appear to have lost their real meaning, and to have become an eager war-cry.

Laughing, shouting, pushing, scrambling, the merry mob passes on. A minute more, and the carnival will be over. Senza moccòlo! senza moccòlo! The lights are visibly diminishing. Hark! there is the well-known signal. Once more my taper is extinguished. The smoke curls round a dying spark and goes up into the night air—Faugh! how it smells as I throw it away. Sic transit gloria mundi.

On Ash Wednesday, after church, I detected Mr. Trotman in the act of writing verses on the frivolities of the previous week. He presented me, after much hesitation, with a copy of them, on the express con-

dition that they were to be read by no one but myself. I hope, therefore, he will forgive me when he finds that I have taken the liberty of introducing them to 'London Society.'

'Hark! The signal gun has sounded,
And its echo has rebounded
From the walls on which was founded
Many mighty Caesars' home,
Riding forth in lordly state,
Prince and civic potentate,
Onward come to celebrate
Their old Carnival at Rome.

'Flags are flying—banners swelling,
The festivities foretelling,
From the proud Venetian's dwelling,
To St. Mary's modest dome :*
In long vista—never ending,
Fair and manly forms are bending
From each window, lustre lending
To the Carnival at Rome.

* The Corso, which is the chief scene of the Carnival, extends from the Palazzo di Venezia to the church of Santa Maria del Popolo.

'From each workshop, field, and mart,
Busy sons of toil depart;
The painter leaves his magic art,
The sage his dusty toms.
With dull care no brow is aching,
But their labour men forsaking,
Come by hundreds merry-making,
To the Carnival in Rome.

'Bonbons drop in snowy showers,
Fairer hands are strewing flowers,
Culled in Doria's mossy bowers,
Or Albano's dusky loam.
My bouquet fell at Laura's feet,
She raised it with a grace so sweet;
'Twas matchless in that crowded street,
And the Carnival at Rome.

'With the speed of lightning vying
Soon the fiery steeds come hising,
Fifty goads around them flying
On their lips a bloody foam.
But ere ends this joyous day,
Let us give one cheer and say
Viva-aaa (which means hurra!)
For the Carnival at Rome.'

JACK EASEL.

HINTS TO POETS ;

Or, *The Spirit of the Age.*

WE'VE heard of jewels, gems, and June,
And jessamine, before ;
May, magic, musical, and moon,
Occur in Tommy Moore.

Whisper and willow, wind and weep,
Dark, dying, desolation—
A modern bard should strictly keep
For *private* circulation.

A truce to this eternal lay
Of sentiment and passion ;
Give us the subjects of the day
Tossed up to meet the fashion.

The sun, the moon, the fleeting breath
Of violets, ere they die,
And day and night, and love and death,
Are *blasé* all, and dry.

We're not materialists, to think
The universe eternal ;
To see in every star a link
To mysteries supernal.

Like sober Christian men we know
This lesson—worth the learning,—
The world's used up, as dry as tow,
And ready for the burning.

And poesy—its fancies blind—
Its world of tremulous feeling—
An orange sucked from rind to rind
And quite unworth the peeling.
But still some praise to him be due
Who, from such sorry farings,
Contrives to cook up something new
From bitter pips and parings.
I never can imagine quite,
Why birds are made to sing,
Or the same flowers to shed their light
Again from spring to spring.
A blithe young bird, that spends its days
In jocund jubilations,
And haply deems its old-world lays
Original creations,
Is one of the absurdest things
A listening world can hear;
A song that's run two thousand springs
Falls very dull upon the ear.
But oh! the nightingale and thrush,
And such impassioned wooers,
I fear will never care a rush
For critics and reviewers.
As waves the wood, as falls the dew,
As springs the buttercup,
That comes again, whate'er we do
To kill, and cut it up,
They sing because, quoth Dr. Watts,
'It is their nature *to*,'
Just as the blue forget-me-nots
Persist in being blue.
But thou, O Poet! seek no more
Thy vain conceits to father,
We've heard of joy and grief before
Of moonlight memories—*rather!*
And as for songs by stream and grove
They're older than Silenus,
While from the rifled flowers of love
There's not a leaf to glean us.
Good night, my friend, the moon shines pale
Through clouds of pearly glow—
'Tis pretty, but exceeding stale,
And most supremely slow.
Good night—the tide flows fast and clear
To fill the moon-lit bays—
But that it's done for many a year,
And now it never pays.
Good night—a soft voice sighs 'good night,'
In murmurous modulations,
'Tis Echo—but how tame and trite
Her puerile publications!

G. F.

THE SIDEBOARD VIEW OF SOCIETY:

AS SEEN BY A 'MAN WHO WAITS OUT.'

I AM a confirmed invalid, condemned, after a youth and manhood of remarkable activity, to an elderlyhood of Bath chairs and sanatory regulations, dependent on my medical man, and reduced to a limited field of observation. 'Why, then, strive to bloom in print? What can you have to say for yourself?' ejaculates the un-gentle reader. A great deal, I assure you. I am chatty and sympathetic; and men, women, and children come to my Bath chair and tell me their troubles, their triumphs, their small views of life, their little convictions, their large condemnations of their neighbours,—and this filtering of 'all sorts' produces a curiously flavoured whole—equal, perhaps, to a sermon under many heads on charity, forbearance, and forgiveness.

A few weeks ago I stumbled on a new experience to me, which I may term the 'Sideboard View of Society.'

It was a rare sunny day. My chair and myself were stationary under one of the large trees in Kensington Gardens, to permit the charioteer (if the appellation be allowable) time to breathe after toiling up a short but steep acclivity. He was a quiet, punctual, civil man, with keen gray eyes and solemn propriety of demeanour. I had often spoken to him during his short rests, but had as yet drawn forth little more than monosyllabic answers. 'Brown,' said I, observing him smother half a dozen consecutive yawns, and that he wore a peculiarly pallid, pasty aspect, 'you look ill; you yawn. You had better let me prescribe a tonic for you before you get permanently out of health.'

'Out of health! No, sir; out late last night, sir.'

'Out late at night, Brown?' said I, reprovingly.

'Yes, sir,' he replied, 'I waits out' (he called it 'hout').

'Oh!' I returned—a vista of curious knowledge opening before me—an occasional waiter, eh?

'Just so, sir.'

'You must be a good deal behind the scenes, then,—up to the shortcomings of plate and contrivances in crockery, eh! Brown?'

'Don't know about the scenes, sir; but I know there's a rum lot to be seen from behind chairs.'

'Ha! And I should say you saw as much as your neighbours.'

'It's my dooty, sir, to have my heyes on heveryone.' He spoke with solemn emphasis, and aspired accordingly.

'There's no end of life to be seen by a man who waits out,' said he meditatively, breaking at length into confidence and loquacity. 'It is not to every one I would talk of the houses as I gets my bread by; but to a gentleman like you' (which, being interpreted, meant 'a poor old fellow who can do no mischief') 'I don't mind saying that for all the outsides of houses are so like there's no two of the insides the same. Some are as stiff as pokers, and rubbed up to that state of polish that they are as slippery as ice; others, again, so loose in the joints that won't work nohow. And I don't know which is the worst. Bless your heart, sir, by the time I've put on my pumps in the pantry, drunk a glass of ale in the kitchen, and took over the plate from the parlour-maid, I can tell the whole bearings of the establishment—if its stiff or loose, or flimsy or solid.'

'I suppose,' said I, 'you are seldom engaged where men servants are kept?'

'Oh! dear yes, sir. They always want supernumeraries. You see, no one, 'cept p'raps a lord, has enough men, or women either, to

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wait on twenty people. But I don't care to go to those families as keeps flunkys: they always make believe to look down on the waiter, and gives themselves airs, though they have quite a limited sphere compared to a man who waits out. No, sir, I like a female establishment' (poor Brown had no idea of an Agapemone). 'They mind what you say, look to your little comforts, and doesn't dispute your superior information. But, sir, of all the houses to wait in there's none like a good comfortable widow lady's, with daughters. Gentlemen are so ready to cut up rough; but the ladies, if you keep a civil tongue in your head, have a deal of consideration—that is, a good many of them; not all, as I'll mention to you. But there's a widow down there in Acacia Villas, with two nice young ladies—her husband was something in the army; she always has his picture in a red coat on her buzzum—a fine personable woman, as you can hear two pair of stairs off rustling in a stiff silk gown. And doesn't she make the whole house keep up to time! but all pleasantly. There is always a right good supper there, and plenty of ale, and a first-rate plain dinner for the company—the best of soup and fish, game and poultry, and lots of nice vegetables and fruit, but no side dishes, 'cept a curry. And, then, how I've seen the old yellow nabobs pitch into the curries, and be like to bust themselves with fire and brimstone stuff of chutney and mangoes, and the like of such outlandish burning rubbish.' Here Brown's face assumed a look of intense disgust. 'She doesn't care two pins what Mrs. this or that or t'other has for her dinners. "But," says she to me, the first time I waited at Acacia Villas, "you'll have no side dishes and trash to hand about. Be quick with the vegetables and sauces, see that every one's glass is kept full, and whoever is not satisfied without Russian rubbish and cat-pie *entrées* may go elsewhere for 'em." Ah! she is a clever woman! Every one is merry and comfortable there, sir; for there's a wonderful likeness between the company and the dinner.'

'The food and the feeders?' I ejaculated.

'Just so, sir. Why, sir, there's a heartiness about widows (as has money, of course) that's quite pleasant to see. But this one will stand no nonsense; not she. Do your work, and play arterwards. That's her motto.'

'But, from what you say,' I interposed, seeing him pause, 'all ladies are not equally considerate?'

'Well! no, sir. I have received no end of kindness from ladies, but there is some on 'em that is just cayenne and lemon-juice together.'

'Not a pleasant compound,' I remarked.

'No, sir, not at all. Why, there's some houses as three times seven and six would not pay you to wait in. Down there in Albion Terrace there's a lady, and isn't she stylish! She is so genteel, sir—that—in short I know nothing genteeler! There is not a thing, from a knife-rest to an *épergne*, that she hasn't a big name for. She has *rayther* a grand turn out of glass and silver, and china, and all that—the table looks very well I must say—but the looks is the best of it. She is fond of the Roosian style, isn't she? She says to a lady I was handing tea to one night, "It's elegant and inexpensive," says she. But you know, sir, five shillings' worth of flowers and green, with a good lot of paper and artificials, make a wonderful show; and, lowering his voice, 'I myself see two roses in a wine-cooler on Tuesday as I observed in her own bonnet in church on Sunday, the i-dential same.' He paused to see the effect of this revelation. 'She's purfessional,' he resumed, evidently full of his subject, 'strongly purfessional.'

'How,' I said; 'in what line? Do you mean an artist?'

'A *hartist*, sir!' he exclaimed; 'Law bless you, sir, she would as soon be a charwoman! Not but that she always has a *hartist* or two in the evening, just as you have olives or ice after dinner, because it's genteel; but there is never no knife nor fork for 'em; you see they give nothing but talk in return—there's no use in feeding *them*. What I mean

by "purfessional" is law, and the lady I'm mentioning thinks it the genteel trade going—her husband is in the law. He is a curious little chap—very curious: he never meddles in anything about the dinner; but it's my belief he has his own way about things out o' doors. And I will say, that if I wanted a trifle of law, it isn't to him I would go. He is thin and dry, and awful clean, like the streets on a March day, when a sharp wind sweeps 'em clear. He looks through and through you, and says very little; but I don't think he is quite as genteel as she is; and, with a genuine burst of admiration, 'there isn't a cleverer woman in all London than that 'ere! She isn't handsome, but there's not two people among all she knows has found it out. She dresses—doesn't she dress!—and what with a flower here and a bit of lace there, a piece of ribbon 't other place, you never seem to see her any way but the way she chooses! Only she sometimes bothers you a bit with too many directions, and that's the only mistake hever she makes, as I knows on. But it's always the same! As soon as I am in the house the words is, "Missis is waitin' to speak to you in the dining-room;" and there she is in a sort of gown that is not fit for a drawing-room and too fine for a bed-room, with a lot of silver and glass spread out before her, and she counts 'em all, and makes me observe they are all right; then she will turn to a young lady as lives with her, and says, "You see, my dear, the number and condition of these things; you will be so good as to take them up from Brown to-night before he goes;" and then she has fifty directions to give—"Don't take the sherry round more than three times, Brown, if you please, and the hock and champagne twice. Pour out the champagne boldly, and just let the froth touch the top of the glass; stop then: there's nothing so ungentle as a full glass. Mind what I say—never fill up any glass, it is so vulgar." Everything that is full is vulgar with her. And then about the dishes—how one was to be carried up one side, and another down the opposite, so as to spin

out four corners into eight; but there she is not far wrong, for no one scarce ever tastes an *entrée*, as they are called. Then it is, "Brown, there are a pair of ducks at the second course, see that you make them go once round"—maybe to sixteen—"and the two ice shapes, they ought to serve twice round." Law bless you, sir, she knows to a grain how much can be got out of everything, and so on, till before I was accustomed to her I used to make a horrid mess between fear and variety of orders; for though it is, "If you please," at every turn, the words sound much more like, "Mind your eye, or I'll pitch into you;" and at the end she finishes mostly with "Remember what I say, for I must not have my mind disturbed during dinner." Then away she sails, an hour and a half before hand, to dress, and leaves miss to watch. Will you move on a bit, sir, interrupting himself, 'p'raps I am tiring you.'

'Far from it, Brown; I am much interested.'

'If ever there was a poor thing worked hard for a crust—and a mighty dry one,' he resumed reflectively—'it's the cousin. She is so cowed by the missis that she is afraid of every one; the cook's just awful to her; and she is horrid frightened to do and say the things she is bid to me. She is supposed to be in delicate 'ealth, and can't dine at table; so, after hanging about to see that nothing's touched, till dinner's just announced, she scurries away into a small back room they call the library, with a skylight to it, and there she sits until the last gentleman's up, and then she comes in and looks away even to a stray cherry. I feels for that poor girl, I do; there's no life or comfort left to her; and she'd be pretty if she had a hope or a kind word. See, sir, I'm a poor man, and I have a little girl as will have to work for her bread, but before I'd have her like that young lady, I'd walk cheerful after her to Kensal Green.'

He paused, and taking off his hat, wiped his brow.

'You cannot much like to wait in Albion Terrace?'

'No, sir; yet I was sorry to lose a "waitin'," and I'll never be sent for to Albion Terrace again.'

'How?' I asked.

'You see, sir, it was through 'elping of another.'

'How did that injure you?'

'I'll tell you, sir. There was a smartish young man, cousin to my wife, as wanted to get on in the waitin' line; active and good-lookin', but "Hirish" and "needn't apply," you know. Well, sir, I wished to give him a turn; and one day there was an out-and-out spread at the Terrace, and I recommends him to hact under me (he goes for three and six, you know), and really, sir, it's a good 'ouse to learn in, there are so many gentilities; so says I, "Do what I bid you; keep your mouth shut, and p'raps it will be an opening." So he puts on his best, and looks very respectable. Now, it's a way with the lady we're a talkin' of to have any rich old cove as she wants to please put alongside of her, and then, as I'm putting the usual thimbleful into his glass, she'll say, with such a sweet smile, "Brown wants to put you on half-rations, I think, Mr. So-and-so—be more bountiful, Brown, if you please." Then you see that particlar chap gets full and plenty, and he doesn't notice how the rest are put off, or thinks it's my hignorance. It's a dodge I've seen her do twenty times. Well, on this here hoccasion, Johnson (his name's Murphy, but that, you know, would never pay), Johnson, of course, was by when she give the usual lot of orders and directions; and because it was a bigger dinner than usual, and a strange man, she was more perticler nor hever about the wine. Johnson was fairly struck with fear at the way she has of saying, "*If* you please," and was rather unhinged before the company came in; however, he got on very well till it came to the wine. Now, this day there was a moest uncommon rich old gent from India' (he said the Hinjees), 'that might have had gold to eat if he'd ask it, sitting next the missis, and Johnson, trembling to have to serve the wine so near her, puts in about a thimbleful, and she makes the usual re-

mark: this bothered him so, he didn't know what to do, so he puts in another thimbleful, at which she frowns sudden upon him, and signs for more, which, not understanding, he says in a loud whisper, "Three quarthers full, shure ye could me yerself." I thought the old gent would have bust a laughin'. "You've got a character there, ma'am," says he. She looked all colours in a minute. They say he never took wittles in that house agin, but went and adopted a nephew in some City office—all I know is, we were packed off, and never sent for no more. It wasn't a pleasant 'ouse to wait in, but still it is a loss.'

Brown here, without consulting me, disappeared behind the chair, and propelled me in silence for a quarter of an hour, during which time I meditated how I should induce him to renew his revelation, which amused me greatly.

'Let us stop here by this disputed ride,' I said at length, and we came to a stand by the newly-erected rails. Brown stood a little in advance, leaning against them meditatively. Suddenly turning to me, he exclaimed—

'There's a gentleman, sir, passed at the other side as employs me, and his house is just the direct opposite of the one I've been telling you of; it is just too much the other way. Bless your 'eart! the meat and the vegitables and the bread that's lying about in that 'ere basement, and the bundles and bundles of firewood, and cheese and potatoes, and eggs, and kitching stuff, and stale milk, to say nothink of jam pots, *not empty*, and scuttles full of coals, and no end of things as the charwoman carries away—they would keep three families. It is a grand house, the colonel's (he was a colonel in India), but somehow it's never all right; there's a something broke in every room, and curiosities of all kinds that you could write your name on in dust, yet they keep four women, and a boy in buttons; and of all the boys I hever come across, that's the most preecocious young villain: he keeps a lob-eared rabbit and two squirrels in the front arey;

and the bills for parsley and lettuce and nuts, and oh I don't know what as he has at the greengrocer's, would drive a careful missus into a lunatic 'sylum; but the missis there is a grand lady, on another tack from the last as I mentioned. She certainly is a liberal lady, and I might get drunk and carry hoff no end of wittles every time I waits there, there is such a lot of things lying about as she never asks after, but I'd scorn it; then you see, sir, all this plenty might be taken, but it isn't given. There's another lady, as I'll tell you of presently; she knows the difference. The dinners there are of that sort that the very men as puts the things on the table ought to be a trifle over the common as to strength and height. Now, for a small party—say six or eight—I've seen a boiled leg of mutton, almost too much for me to lift, a big roast turkey with about three pound of sausages round it, a large-sized pig's cheek, and a curry, beside fish, and two or three kinds of vegetables; it's melancholy, to say nothink of its being vulgar! When there's a spread there's generally two women in to 'elp the cook and parlourmaid, there's myself and a stuck-up chap as thinks a deal more of hisself than I do, who gets his 'alf suvvin for carving, and another under him, but the whole three of us are scarcely able to keep that page out of mischief: he seems to have a spite against us; whips away plates before people's half done, and keeps thrusting wrong sauces under the company's noses, wine sauce to game, and p'raps lobster-sauce to hiced pudding. I've heard tell of banditti in Hitly, and that 'ere boy's a banditti; he's never content to have one thing at a time on a plate, but as soon as a slice, may be of roast beef, is put on, away he goes and gets a slice of tongue, or a spoonful of curry, or some other out-of-the-way mixture; he has no civilization. And then the state of the plate and glasses—it's something awful!"

Here Brown paused with tragic effect.

'It's a desperate business there to get up the *hentrés*, and as to the second course! bless your 'cart, sir!

I've seen the missis (I name no names) turn round every bracelet on her harms a dozen times, and the last word of conversation just die away, till you might hear that chap as carves, a breathin' hard behind the master's chair; and when I've stole away to see if the kitching chimney's a fire, or any other such misfortune happened, maybe I find the cook a sitting at one side of the table, and the charwoman at the other, discussing wages an' bonnets over a bottle of wine, as they has for sauces; then when I go in rayther in a flutter, the cook will say, quite hoity toity, "Gracious goodness, Mr. Brown, where's the hurry? give the company time to digest their food, we're not slaves, are we?" Oh! she's a cool hand, that 'ere cook; then when I comes back, there's the old colonel a shoutin', "What the d—l's become of the dinner?" disregardin' manners altogether. As to the young ladies (there's four of them) they don't care for nothing, except the gents along side of 'em; and they always do have gents with no end of moustachiers and shirt-fronts, to take them down to dinner; swells, you know, sir, as always has a French name for hevery dish, and don't they want waitin' on! And then the young ladies keep laughin' an' showing their teeth, an' tossing their heads, an' chattering like so many canary birds. They are no more like some ladies, as we hands coffee to in the drawin' room, quarter of an hour arter lounging about half asleep, than a dancing-dog is to a dormouse.' Brown paused after this imaginative effort, and taking out his handkerchief, flicked away the dust from the panels of the chair, then resumed, meditatively: 'There's no end of differences between houses and dinners, but p'raps the greatest differences is in talk. Why, sir, it's downright curious to listen to one set of people, one day, and another to-morrow, and so on. At the house as I mentioned to you (the widow's) the conversation is just like the dinner, it's plain, but pleasant; the gentlemen are a little fond of old fashions in politics, and horses, and all that; but then they never seem

to look down on any one, only the old military gents don't like "The Times" writing about military affairs. I've heard a deal of hard swearing about it after the ladies have left the room; they don't know no French names for nothink, but they are all *gentlemen*, an' the ladies, some of them in petticoat, couldn't be given the go-by nowhere. Then at t'other one, it's all cut an' dry; one begins, maybe, about the court, and what Her Majesty wore there; and another will cut in with the last Philharmonic; they're strong in concerts at Albion Terrace, but whatever the talk's about, you may be sure it's all fashionable and correct; no one ever forgets himself there. I sometimes think it's in the Rooshian style as well as the dinners, for they say Rooshia's a terrible hiey place, and everything as is said there might have been packed in hiey twenty years back, for all the life it has; then I knows as well as if I was inside of her, the missis never is 'appy unless she sends away two or three of the ladies dying of spite, to see how much better she can do things on less than they can, and two or three of the gentlemen downright cross with their wives because she manages to make them think her so much carefuler, and closer, and sweeter, and milder, and what not, something between a hangel and a screw. I wish they had her, that's all. An' doesn't she swell out as she says, "You will despise my small ways and methodical system after your magnificent style of doing things, when p'raps everything has gone wrong at t'other's own house a few days before. I know how she sours every one, by the way the ladies speak, so vexed like, when they comes out. Ah! it's wonderful what a deal of money the nobs spend to make one another *uncomfortable*."

'You are a philosopher, Brown,' I remarked, 'and well versed in the science of generalizing.'

'As to that, sir, I'm an ignorant man, but I do see a pretty large sprinkling of generals, specially at the colonel's, and I should say they are rayther a greedy lot! At their age you see, sir, it's not the ladies

nor the conversation, so much as the wittels, that's the hobject; one keeps bawling for bread, and another for wine, and others for more sauces and pickles than ever was found in any cookery book; and not one of them will wait a minute—till a waiter doesn't know what to lay his hands on first. The talk there, too, is different again, it's very military; the ladies never mentions any one's name, but they add the regiment he belongs to. All the funny stories, too, are about majors and captains, or new joined officers; the curious thing is, that no stranger as didn't know all the ins and outs of everybody, would be able to find out where the fun was; but the company there is easy made laugh and as easy put in a passion.

'Bless your 'eart, sir, I've heard such contradictions flying across the table, as you'd think would lead to blows. I've heard the young ladies theirselves snap each other up wonderful. They are fond of fashion, too, at the colonel's; but it's a different sort from Albion Terrace, more what's called Fast, and the ladies do sometimes,' lowering his voice, 'sing comic songs—not often—but I have heard them; and the gents all have a "bacey" before they go away; still they are open-handed, and I think a deal more on 'em than that stuck-up set at the Terrace. Now sir,' he resumed, 'if y're not tired, I should like to name another family, as goes on quite a different line from all I've named before, that you may not think I find fault with all my employers; far from it, only I feel inclined to speak confidential to you. But there's a house not half an hour's walk from here as it's a pleasure to go into—Laurel Lodge, down by P—Square. It's not a fine house, nor a rich family, least-ways nothing to speak of; but there's a comfort and a nicety, not to say a elegance about that 'ere establishment as beats most places high and low as I waits in. The gentleman's something in the City, a good-looking man though not handsome, and a bit hasty and wilful; but it's the lady that's at the top and bottom of everything. It's

a house I like to go to, a pretty place, with lots of flowers and pictures, and no end of nice things, all put just in the right place, and as neat and tidy as if no one ever moved about, and yet not cumbersome. The lady is not to say a beauty, but pleasant-looking, and speaks so soft and kind. There's a large and a small drawing-room at one side of the hall, and a dining-room and morning-room at the other. They never have what may be called a great spread there, never more than ten or twelve, and no champagne; port and sherry and claret, but all very perticular, I've been told; and they only keep three women, cook, housemaid, and nursemaid, for there are two pretty children, a boy and a girl, about four an' five year old. Then they have a nice lot of plate, though some of it is very old-fashioned, and there it is as clean an' bright as a new pin, all laid out ready when I goes in, and the glass the same; and the missis, p'raps, will be putting fresh flowers in a pretty basket they use for the middle of the table instead of a heavy épergne; and then she has just a few directions to give, so clear that it would be a stupid indeed as would make a mistake; and then away she goes to play with the children, or sing to them, or something. There's no kind of flurry in that establishment. The dinner is the same sort they have every day, only more of it, and one or two perticular dishes, and hicc p'raps from the confectioner's, what can't be done in the usual run of kitchenings, but every one knows his own work there. They has these sort of dinners two or three times a month, and they are used to them; the cook, she is a steady one; and though she has your supper right good and comfortable, with a first-rate pot of porter, takes good care of the wittles, and knows they'll be looked after the next day. Then the missis will be dressed an' ready and glide in so quiet and composed, and sure of herself when everything's laid, to see all's right; and she's ready for the master directly he comes home, with p'raps a pine or a melon or something good for dessert. Often the company comes before

him, but that never puts either of 'em out, for they're somehow not wanting to seem finer at one time than another, and the company's just the same. Bless your 'eart, sir, it would do you more good than all the doctors in London to hear the laughing and fun, and the jokes that goes on! The missis, too, has such a kind way with her, every one seems to feel that he or she, as the case may be, is real downright welcome; and if she's a thought kinder or more attentive to any one, you may be sure that's a poor relation, or some one as has been unfortunate in the City, or somethink of that sort. And she can talk too! and has something pleasant to say about everything; but it's the way she has of listening, as if it was a pleasure to her, that makes every one feel so light and good-humoured. Then as to the wittles, it's my belief, said Brown, solemnly, 'that if I stood up before her and said, "If you please 'm, the roast haunch or the ducks, or whatever the principal dish might be, has fell into the fire," she would just say; "Well I hope there is enough left to satisfy the cravings of hunger," or something like that; nor as long as she could make people happy, would she care two pins about seeming in apple-pie order, or better than others, or anything of the sort. Then you see everything being looked to in time and working free from fear, as it were, seeing the missis so quiet an' easy, all goes right. I never was in a house where there's so little fuss, and so few misfortunes. I sometimes think when you don't expect evil, it doesn't come. The gentlemen don't sit long there, and there's such a pleasant evening afterwards. They sing and they play, and sometimes act plays, an' more times they get talking of such curious things, politics and the Bible, and painting and books, and what things are made of. Why, sir, you'd think their whole lives depended on these here bout of the way subjects; they go into them so earnest like, and seem to be so taken up with what they are saying—not the way they say it, but it does them a deal of good—they stay later there than

almost any other house I waits in, except it's a ball; and I always observe the company go away brighter and more cordial-like than they come in, as if they had been warmed and cheered up body and soul. Then the missis nearly always settles with me herself, and looks into the pantry, and the kitching; and last winter, when my wife was ailing a long time, she would make me call the next day, and give me with her own hand nice little odds and ends of soups and sweets and jelly, what I know as she had thought over as would be best. Now a good turn like that from a careful lady is quite a different thing from being let to carry away a lot of broken wittles by the cook, which no one is thankful for, nor no one kind to give.

'You'll excuse my speaking so bold, sir, but you see a man as waits hout has a curious lot of hopportunities, and sees a deal of insides,

and I can't help saying, 'that 'in parties of all kinds, more depends upon the missis than the master; for though I am an ignorant man, I know p'raps better than a wiser one what makes a dinner go off well. It isn't the fine feed, nor the wery perticular wine, nor yet the grand people that's to drink it, but the spirit it's all done in; and when the master and missis doesn't want to make things seem finer and bigger than they'll stretch to, nor to mortify nobody by overdoing them, but are just real anxious to please the company, and make 'em happy and at home, it's quite wonderful what a deal of comfort and satisfaction can be got at a low figure.' Brown paused here, shook his head gravely, disappeared behind the chair, and propelled me in silence towards home, while I meditated approvingly on his recipe for a successful dinner.

FLORAL HINTS AND GOSSIP :

Window Fashions and Novelties of the Conservatory.

SPRING flowers, budding trees, fragrant new-mown lawns, blossoms of pearly May. These are the fair belongings of the days that are passing now. And we poor London dwellers are shut out from all of these, and from all the pleasures of the fragrant spring.

There is the disputed point. Some people hold that a single flower-stand, or a window-ledge, may bring to us all the pleasure that the country gives, reminding us so vividly of the places we long to see, the green and bowery lanes, and the sloping glades, where the wind-flowers star the turf, and where the great narcissus clusters round the trees. It is not so much the actual sight we want, but to strike the key-note, and awake the music that ripples amidst the leaves. It was but a little moss in the trackless and sandy waste which cheered the traveller's path, and touched his heart to tears—no very great thing—only a blade of

moss. And so to us a root of some wild flower may be no great thing, neither very costly nor very hard to grow, and yet, for simple happiness, few things may be more winning than the bright pink blossom of the pimpernel; the scent of the wild thyme that we have so often trodden; the little harebell, with its elastic stalk; the scented, pencilled, pale anemone; and the three-lobed wood sorrel, with its dazzling green, and its purple red-streaked bell.

The tenderest wild flowers will live amongst our streets, if we do but tend them with the care they ask.

The old garden flowers are many of them still our very greatest favourites; and amongst hot-house plants, for those who delight exceedingly in all that is new and rare, surely there is enough to be gathered of ever-varied beauty.

My own especial taste is for common things. So first, to-day, I shall

write of a glass of English wild flowers, and then I will describe a gorgeous stand of exotic brilliance, and a few of the new and beautiful 'foliage plants.'

First for the little wild flower. One half of the lady florists have never so much as seen the little pale wood sorrel—a little flower, thin as a frozen vapour—streaked with lines of the darkest red, hung on a bending stalk, and nestled upon a bed of the freshest green.

In a pine wood corner I used to see it grow: there a whole mass of the loveliest green would fill a glade at the foot of one old tree, the little flowers spangled all about, and above sang the wood pigeons, who built in the pine trees' shade. Even as very children, eager after all wild flowers, we could respect that dazzling, lovely bed. The shady spot, and the bright blue sky seen through the pine trees' top, made it all so beautiful.

These little flowers, then, should be grown in shade—in one of those northern windows which drive their owners frantic, in the fear that no plants will thrive there.

Why not adopt the pretty Belgian fashion, now gaining ground amongst us—a little sloping outer window? Say we have a wooden box placed on a little bracket, or on a side-less balcony; a low little wall, of three panes of glass, encloses it, set in a wooden frame, and screwed to the wall or window frame. The top is formed of one or two larger panes; and this may be hinged on to the centre window bar, to drop thence to the edge or frame of the front glass wall. A little care is needed that these joints should be water-tight; and being thus once arranged, we have a tiny greenhouse ready at any moment, by an opened window, to scent the room with flowers.

Of course our window forms the back of this little plant-house; and very many of the hardier ferns and flowers we there may grow most perfectly—watering the soil a little on a fine warm day, but never saturating anything in a flower-pot. Ferns and wood-sorrel, anemones and bluebells, primroses and sweet

woodruff, sweetbriar and cowslips, all will thrive brightly there.

Such a trumpery heap of weeds!—we will leave them instantly, and pass to the consideration of a more splendid style.

The most beautiful material that I know for flower-stands is a dark rich ware, called English majolica. It has, of course, all sorts of variations; but I saw one large vase lately (it was made, I believe, at Phillips's in New Bond Street) which certainly would harmonize with any sort of colour.

There are, of course, endless variations; but the plain material, made in a good shape, is as all-commodating as an Indian shawl. The colours are blended in a manner almost as charming.

We may suppose a vase (in shape not unlike that in an illustration of the last month's number of 'London Society,' only without the glasses), low, and wide, and round—perhaps in the centre a tall tree fern rises—perhaps a graceful pillar of clustering, climbing roses; or a white camellia, covered with its heavy blossoms; lovelier still, a deutzia, fringed with snowy tassels waving and shining like flakes of the purest snow. Rose-coloured flowers and hyacinths may be clustering round; blue lobelias and forget-me-nots are hanging upon the brink; a streamer of blue clematis has caught upon the white rose, or a lapageria wreath has twined almost to the floor. And let me never forget the little red China rose: it is so very bright, comes early, and lasts long. Then the old pink rose—which now is grown, apparently, chiefly on cottage walls—for sweetness and for loveliness there are not many like it.

There is a hanging basket—I hear, quite a Paris fashion—so of course it ought to be very fine. It represents a cabbage; yet more, it is a *fine* cabbage—my cook says it's a savoy!

It is of all baskets certainly the funniest; and being made of china, it looks as if it were a great green vegetable, all crisped, and curled, and wrinkled, like a winter cabbage on a frosty day. The colour is really

pretty, and would suit well with pink roses; but it is to be confessed that cabbage stalks are awkward terminations, and the monster should hang low.

Whether it is the name or what I cannot pretend to say, but it strongly strikes me that a group of cabbage roses would be the most proper flowers for suspending in it. But let me not be suspected of speaking with disrespect of the cabbage rose. By its prettier name—one of the Provence class—it is not at all despised; and as a *sort* of cabbage, we might have pink moss, or the white rose unique.

Making a long digression, apropos of hanging baskets, it always much surprises me that Orchids are not more common. I heard of one yesterday—one of *Lycaste Skinneri*—which has now lasted in a drawing-room for more than fourteen weeks, and this without any extra protection. I have some myself, of the beautiful *Calanthe vestita*, and of the pink *Limatodes*, which for some weeks past have been waving across my plant case their beautiful wreaths of flowers. One of these *Calanthes* is spotted with a rosy lilac; the other has a sort of pale amber centre. The petals of each are very clear and waxen, and though the buds are slow in opening, the flowers when once out seem quite as slow in fading; while no plants can be more various than Orchids in their beautiful shapes and colours, providing brilliant butterflies to hover on ladies' bouquets, and the pretty picture of the nestling dove. Their ways of growing, too, are so various that they are in themselves an interest; some suspended, soil-less, on a dry piece of wood, living indeed on some aerial food; others requiring to be constantly well bathed, basket and all, in water; others rooting themselves into decaying tree trunks; others fastening on to the very stones of the hot-house wall; others, cruel plants, preying on their own neighbours!

The reason that amateurs do not often succeed in growing them is partly that they forget that Orchids are almost like bulbs, in the absolute

requisition of a time of entire rest: some months for dryness, for not growing, for fairly lying by, are absolutely necessary for all kinds of plants. Bulbs *insist* on it, Orchids will not dispense with it; and the sooner people begin to give it regularly to all their petted plants the sooner they will find their work in gardening easy.

My beautiful *Calanthes* have one little weakness, that of wanting green. It is, however, wonderful how easily, in almost all cases, this can be given by placing the plants without leaves, in a natural manner, amongst some evergreens. Wonderfully beautiful, indeed, are the leaves of plants. I know nothing more pleasant than flower-stands filled with green—not quite with ferns alone, because ferns grow so much in shade that there is a sort of unnaturalness in the absence of a tree—but a stand of ferns, a palm-tree too, wide-spreading, with silvery feathery fronds, or the close-growing fir; and some delicate drooping flower, as snowdrops, hiding, or wood anemones sheltering in the really natural little ferny bed; for what we want after all is to see the things growing even in our drawing-rooms just as in some dingle they might grow themselves, grouped round a tree of rather larger growth, sheltering beneath them little woodland flowers.

We are always seeing some especial evergreen, which, by its colour, or by its mode of growth, strikes us at once as doing well with such things as ferns. The list too, day by day, is being more extended, till one almost waits to see the 'foliage plants,' with their brightly-painted or snow-besprinkled leaves actually take the places, in our stands, of flowers. And they have, too, the worthy quality, that 'foliage plants,' in the gardenesque slang, being not flowers, but leaves, are so far less fleeting.

As far as I have had experience amongst drawing-room plants, it seems to me that their health and beauty may be thought inseparable. There is not any grace in a flagging leaf, whilst in luxuriant freshness everything is forgotten of quality, or

of kind, in enjoying to the utmost its brilliant look of health.

Nor, indeed, is it wonderful that, on grounds of intrinsic worth, these 'foliage plants' are popular. Fancy great leaves of some two feet long, and of equally enormous breadth, all the surface seeming like the richest velvet, and even the touch presenting a sort of silky pile. A kind of leafy, branchy pattern is traced in a lighter shade on the rich dark green, and decided lines of ivory or of silver seem to divide the surface with their graceful curves. The under edge, where that heavy sweep of foliage swings in a curve aside, is shown to be of a purple or of a reddish hue—but the dark-green velvet texture is the greatest charm. I once heard some one say—gazing meditatively at one of these great leaves—that she would really not mind much having a dress like that. She was measuring it with her eyes, and evidently calculating the yards of her material. It is indeed a singular compliment to talk of flowers as resembling wax, or of leaves being velvety; still, I do confess, my first impression was that that leaf *was* cut out.

It is a great acquisition this *Cyanophyllum magnificum*, for it is not so expensive as some other of the new plants, and except for requiring a reasonable degree of heat (being brought originally from the hot, moist woods of Mexico), it is not hard to grow. Such plants as these would really be worth having, and a few well-chosen things, lasting long enough to show their own mode of growth, would be very pleasant for those who like to watch the silent marvels constantly going on. Very marvellous, indeed, is the diversity of green leaves; one remembers one's childish wonder in hearing that no two leaves were ever found alike—and how many leaves we did then pull off—beginning with the laurels which we thought must soon be matched, though I doubt if we took in much—at that time at any rate—of the many varieties there are even in size and colour.

Contrasting vividly with the vel-

vet foliage come the long, narrow, glowing crimson leaves of the red *Dracena*, which is most attractive in its many changes, bright veins of red appearing here and there, then a crimson edging creeping up the leaf, and at last, in suitable warmth, whole leaves assuming this most brilliant hue. The plant is, in fact, as good as a thermometer by which to judge of the heat of stoves or plant-cases. My own plant stands in the middle of a flower-case in a drawing-room window; and the case itself being a private invention and a special 'hobby,' the thriving condition indicated by all this glowing colour has been very gratifying.

Then there are the *Caladiums*—long, narrow drooping leaves—like spear-heads reversed, carrying one off in thought to shores like those of some slow-creeping Ceylon river, where amidst the strange sharp cries of many a gay, wild bird their leaves are drooping in their exceeding beauty.

There is a lovely little *Caladium argyrites* with the glossy soft green leaves peculiar to the tribe, all flecked and sprinkled over as with flakes of snow. Another much larger leaf is in colour somewhat similar; only in the *Caladium Belleyneyii*, a sort of rosy blush tinges the inner surface; and in others, again, the colour gathers into deep rose spots, which mingle with the white. Others, again, present quite a metallic lustre, the *Caladium Veitchii*, for instance, being a great shield-shaped leaf with a shining surface and a burnished lurid lining of a purplish hue.

Then we have mosses—exquisite forms of ferns; delicate and beautiful both in colour and form: and let us glance for a moment at the wonderful aquatic plants which load the lakes and rivers, far up in but half-known lands, from whence these floating marvels are one by one brought home to us. Think of the queen of water plants! the enormous rafts of the *Victoria lily*—the marvellous texture—the long anchoring roots of the lattice leaf (*Ouviranda fenestralis*)—a wonderful plant from the warm Madagascar waters, the leaves of which seem

like lace, as in the 'ivy skeletons,' we all used to seek as children. There is a most interesting description given of this plant in an old volume of a French horticultural magazine of two or three years ago, in which, after mentioning the introduction of the lattice leaf at the gardens at Kew and at Chelsea (where it may still be seen in Veitch's beautiful conservatory), the embarrassments caused by the multitude of crocodiles which shared with the plant the banks of its native stream are graphically described.

These plants are grown, like the Victoria regia, in reservoirs of warm water, and their lace-like leaves float like a naiad's veil just underneath the surface, slowly, silently, waving to and fro with the heaving and swelling waters.

Perhaps for the dinner-table a few new hints may not be quite uninteresting, while we talk of lovely flowers and water plants. One of the newest things in this way is a *lake* of looking-glass bordered with moss and ferns; this is represented as being at once amusingly fresh and pretty.

A margin of tablecloth is left for people's plates, and then comes the verge of beautiful green moss, the sheet of shining glass looking like smooth water, and the ferns and flowers all reproduced upon it.

The feet of china figures are half buried in the herbage; and tall-growing flowers, exquisite wreaths of orchids (as, for example, the *Calanthe vestita*), snowy camellias, and rose-coloured climbing lilies, massive spikes of blue and purple hyacinths, and a wealth of fern-sprays, are repeated constantly on the literally 'glassy' water.

The border may be so lovely! My own delight in flowers is such, that every fresh-found instance of their ever-new forms of loveliness is an actual pleasure to me. That verge of moss! think of it full of lilies just rising up above it, and then drooping down in their pure pearl bells, which are yet scarce unclosed. Then the waxen daisies and the starry auriculas, so exquisitely painted and with so fine a brush; the fairy cyclamen with its rich purple

spot, and its sometimes rosy tint, and its fragrant scent; the loveliest wild primroses in their still folded buds, and with the one just open; and our own home flower, the little woodland violet, nestling in continually, and revealed but by its perfume, which speaks of the mossy banks and of the sunny lanes.

This glass, I think, is a very good invention, for red velvet cushions put on a dinner-table, to me are a perfect grief; I never can disconnect them from a place upon shop tables or in a lady's jewel-box; and it seems that on dinner-tables such things are out of place. If they formed part of the vase or dish it might not be so unnatural; but I don't like haberdashery on a dinner-table.

White damask is certainly fairly an institution, and sorry indeed would any one be to part with it, were it even for silken sheen. Vases and dishes we *must* have to hold our dinners, or their more unsubstantial accessories; but red velvet pedestals, or pincushions if you please, *they* are not wanted, and certainly seem to me to be most intrusive articles. It is as if ladies wore their diamonds made up on bands of velvet to imitate the jewel-box which displays them so becomingly; and fancy a diamond brooch carefully pinned upon a small velvet cushion in front of a lady's dress! Some of the foliage plants of which I spoke just now are extremely pretty, arranged on glass, as in this new fashion. My own impression is, that figures and *real* baskets, or baskets of such light china as to look like real, are the proper things. A low wide-spreading basket of gilded or silvered work—the wonderfully beautiful Mexican and Peruvian filigree which we sometimes see, looking like silver lace—leaves of plants, again, knotted and twined together till they form woven frames;—these are, I think, the things for this sort of table.

Three or four wreaths of ivy or some enlaced flag-shaped leaves, would be very pretty—for the latter, securing the cut ends of the long, narrow leaves to a cardboard floor,

bringing them up and crossing them, securing them at the top just by a thin black wire, all overcrept with moss. *Dracena* leaves, grass, flags, yuccas, all sorts of long, thin leaves, might thus make very charming water-suggestive baskets.

I do not advocate the gilding leaves or painting them; though it is true that sometimes, when the colour goes, it is well to retain the shape of the natural leaf, and they may be beautiful. Perhaps for these baskets no shape is so good as the oval kind leaning slightly outwards, done very openly, perhaps three to eight inches high and nine to twenty-four inches wide, to suit the size of the table.

I cannot resist supposing such a basket, of the larger size, made of the lightest structure, creeping mosses hanging down through the sides, and the *Linaria cymbelaria* or little ferns or trailers mantling at the foot. This must be arranged to make a good reflection. For the centre plant I should choose a tall white azalea—not one of those which make a mass of blossom such as is almost heavy in its unrelief, but a plant with branches spreading, covered with sweet snow-drifts. Then should come ferns; for though they wave most charmingly and are lovely to see, they are not dense enough to obstruct a view.

Red poinsettias contrast vividly with azaleas; or there is a most brilliant scarlet or coral orchid

(*Epidendrum vitellinum*) which lights up and relieves the white by its own brilliant glow. Otherwise there are heaths; again there are euphorbias, bright-red tulips for an undergrowth—low, almost prostrate plants of the white azaleas thrusting their blossoms over, and clustering on the rim. Then there are knots of snowdrops and of the pretty little vernal 'snowflake,' which is like a snowdrop of taller and larger growth. Ferns keep adding to the spreading shade, reflecting themselves, like the flowers, in the watery surface, and tufts of ferns and even wreathing blossoms sometimes creep down through the open basket sides, breaking any straightnesses, with many pretty knots of the smallest flowers. The basket, of course, is lined with a case of zinc lower than itself and by no means closely fitting. Flowers are trained out and moss is taught to droop down over this inner tin, which ought to be painted of the darkest green, some people might say black.

The ground is all filled, as usual, with the moss that makes of the whole one living, verdant pile.

Most carefully must it be remembered, in arranging these or any other flowers, that it is not in the least to *show off* our flowers we want. We simply want to make such an artistic group as may be a model of gracefulness and of harmony.



PRIVATE THEATRICALS :

Arming for the Part.

ILLUSTRATED BY F. R. PICKERSHILL, R.A.

' When you speak, sweet,
 I'd have you do it ever : when you sing,
 I'd have you buy and sell so ; so give alms ;
 Pray so ; and, for the ordering your affairs,
 To sing them too. When you do dance, I wish you
 A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
 Nothing but that ; move still, still so, and own
 No other function. Each your doing,
 So singular in each particular,
 Crowns what you're doing in the present deeds,
 That all your acts are queens.'

Winter's Tale.

SHE cons the tender tale again,—
 That peerless tale of love and woe ;
 Until the griefs she seeks to feign
 Have taught unbidden tears to flow :
 And sighs she should but simulate,
 Mere ensigns of a feigned distress,
 The Poet can, at will, create,
 She cannot, if she would, repress !

She knows the course of mortal love
 Did never yet untroubled glide ;
 That Faith resides in realms above ;
 That crosses earth-born hopes betide ;
 That e'en when love and truth unite
 In bands that death alone may part,
 Stern, sordid Care is near to blight
 The cherished visions of the heart !

So deems this life a Tragedy
 Of intermittent good and ill ;
 A chequered sky, a troubled sea,
 Ending with some deep sorrow still :
 Sad Fiction's soft embodiment,
 Until she half believes it sooth ;
 And can each phase of grief present
 With all the eloquence of truth !

In stole arrayed of nun-like state,
 Impassive to those busy hands
 That fix the dagger, smooth the plait,
 With air absorbed Castara stands !
 The hum of gathered guests without,
 Sweet girlish laughter of the heart,
 And childhood's glad, exulting shout,
 Recall her to herself and part.

Sweet sisters ! fair antitheses !
 Bright contrasts of the grave and gay !
 May all your future griefs, like these,
 As lightly come, as briefly stay !
 Should sorrow prompt the tear or sigh,
 Oh ! be it ever thus ideal ;
 Fictitious woes but dim your eye,
 And nothing but your bliss be real !

THE NEW PICTURE AND THE NEW PROCESS.

A PART even from its merits as a work of art, the picture of 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blücher after the Battle of Waterloo,' which Mr. MacIise has just completed in the Royal Gallery of the New Palace at Westminster, has, as it seems to us, claims to a more respectful consideration than is usually given to such works. With the exception of Mr. Watts's fresco in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn, it is the largest mural painting executed in England in the present century; and it greatly exceeds the Lincoln's Inn fresco in the amount of labour bestowed upon it. It is painted in a material new to English artists. It is one of the first attempts made in this country to paint contemporaneous history on a large scale with a strict regard to historical truth; and it is the result of years of almost undivided and laborious application on the part of one of our most esteemed painters.

Before speaking of the picture it may be well to notice the process. The new picture is commonly designated a fresco. It is really a water-glass painting. Between the two methods there is this in common, that the painting is executed on a ground composed of lime and sand (technically *intonaco*); but there the resemblance ceases. In fresco the *intonaco* must be painted on whilst it is still moist (whence, indeed, the name, *fresco*, Ital. 'fresh'). Consequently only so much of the ground can be spread in the morning as the artist can paint over during the day. For each day's work there must be laid down a fresh portion of *intonaco*. This, of course, necessitates as many joinings as the work has occupied days; and as the chief value of fresco lies in its adaptation to mural painting, where usually a large space has to be covered, the joinings will probably be very numerous. Mr. MacIise has, for example, on a careful computation (and throwing out of the reckoning Sundays and holidays) been engaged a year and a half of days on the actual painting of this picture, which, therefore, if a fresco, must

have had at least five hundred and fifty joinings. Now all these joinings would have to be concealed. To this end the fresco painter regulates each day's work as far as practicable by the leading outlines of his composition, and, if he be prudent, takes this necessity into consideration in preparing his design. But plaster shrinks and colours change in drying, and no management can obviate the necessity of patching over the joinings with distemper, or some other ill-matching material; and the obvious result is, injury to the local and general effect, and danger to the permanency of the picture as a whole. In water-glass painting this difficulty is got rid of. The entire surface to be painted over is prepared before the picture is begun, and the painter goes on with his work, day after day, just as he would if he were painting in oil on a prepared canvas, having merely to moisten the surface before commencing to paint upon it.

Another condition imposed by the necessity of painting in fresco upon the moist surface is, that the painter must complete his work at once. Fresco allows of no change or modification. If any error be detected, the part must be removed, a new coat of plaster be spread, and the section be repainted. Hence the necessity of a fac-simile cartoon, the size of the picture, being previously prepared. And just as Raffaele's famous Cartoons were copied by the tapestry workers at Arras, might the finished cartoon for a fresco be copied on the *intonaco* by any one else almost as well as by the designer. In fact, this is what is commonly done in the case of the much-vaunted frescoes of Germany. Cornelius or Kaulbach makes the cartoon, but the actual painting on the wall is left to scholars or assistants. Water-glass painting, on the other hand, permits the freest use of the artist's individuality. He may admit or reject as much or little as he pleases of his original design; correct what is erroneous; avail himself as he goes on of advice or criticism; paint

directly from his model; or what, if he be a really great painter, is best of all, follow the promptings of his genius as he works there with his mind full of his subject, and all his heart and energy concentrated upon it. Those who saw Mr. MacIise's cartoon, when exhibited in the Royal Gallery about two years ago, will remember what a magnificent drawing it was; and, noticing a broad general resemblance in the completed picture, will not suspect probably that there has been any material deviation. But, in fact, Mr. MacIise has been able to make, without difficulty, alterations of every description, and, thereby, from the great amount of information proffered during its progress, to increase materially its historical accuracy—a matter of primary importance in a work of this order.

Again—not to multiply illustrations which will occur to every one who has handled a pencil or who will reflect for a moment on the subject—from the causticity of fresh lime, fresco allows the use of only a limited palette; the colours change considerably in drying, and they cannot be safely modified by the superposition of tints. The painter in water-glass may, however, use nearly the entire range of colours. When dry his colours appear the same as when first applied, or rather as when obtained in powder from the colourman; and the process admits of any amount of working upon the first painting that the taste or manner of the artist may lead him to desire. The one process, in fact, is hard, exacting, unyielding, and at the same time limited in range; the other free, elastic, admitting of the application of any style or method, and as open to the transient play of genius as to the most studied academic propriety. Water-glass painting, in a word, seems to offer all the advantages of fresco for mural decoration with special capabilities of its own.

And now, it may be asked, what is water-glass painting? Well, apart from technicalities, and without reference to working details, the explanation may be given in a word: water-glass painting (or stereochromy as

the Germans call it) is, as Mr. MacIise has well expressed it, precisely water-colour painting in its purest form. Ordinary water-colours require water and gum at least, and there is usually added honey or some other material that facilitates working or serves to add a fictitious lustre to the pigments. In water-glass painting no vehicle whatever is employed save distilled water. The painting is performed by thin washes of colour, which, as has been mentioned, may be modified by the superposition of other colours. When the painting is finished it is 'fixed' by being washed over with the water-glass (soluble silicate of potash diluted) in the manner of a varnish; but which, unlike varnish, leaves the surface free from gloss. The German painters at first used the water-glass as a vehicle to mix with the colours, and Mr. MacIise tried that method, but found that the brush quickly became stiffened, and that anything like freedom of handling was impracticable. With the other method he is, after the experience of his great picture, quite satisfied.

The question, however, remains, Is it permanent? The rumours of the rapid deterioration of the frescoes already painted in the New Palace may well suggest such an inquiry. As far as can be ascertained from experience and experiments, water-glass painting promises to be, not only more permanent than fresco, but more permanent than any other method of painting now practised. The silicate of potash is absorbed into the intonaco and enters into chemical combination with it, leaving the paint a mere pellicle on the surface, protected by what is, in fact, an extremely thin coating of glass. Should it be found, in course of time, that the potash effloresces, or that the sulphuric acid in the London atmosphere has acted on the water-glass, it seems to us that there would be no practical difficulty in cleaning the surface of the picture and covering it with a new coating of the silicate; and this, if carefully done, might of course be repeated as often as necessary. In Munich, and elsewhere in Germany, there are water-

glass paintings which have stood from fifteen to twenty years without showing any symptoms of deterioration; whilst frescoes of the same age, and placed under the same circumstances, are materially injured. Kaulbach has given up fresco painting on account of the altered appearance of the frescoes painted by him. His great pictures at Nuremberg and Berlin are executed in water-glass, of which he is a warm advocate. It was, as we have understood, his dissatisfaction with the state of the recently-painted frescoes that led Mr. Maclise to turn his attention to the new process. He had received the commission to paint this large picture in fresco, but he felt that our modern frescoes were not satisfactory, and he made a journey to Italy in order to examine the old frescoes, and ascertain, if he could, whether the failure was not due rather to the modern method than to the process itself. The result was far from encouraging. He turned his thoughts to the water-glass process, and made numerous trials of it. Still dissatisfied, he resolved to go to Germany and compare the two processes in actual operation. What he saw convinced him of the superiority of the new process. He mastered the technical difficulties connected with it, and, after acquiring facility by means of many trial-pictures and experiments, commenced the painting. We have now the completed work, and, if in no other respect, it will at once be acknowledged to be in this thoroughly satisfactory. There are in it a force and depth of colour, a richness and variety of surface, a playfulness of handling, a refinement and finish, such as are never seen in fresco, and, indeed, are incompatible with its conditions.

So much for the process. Let us now look at the picture. The meeting of Wellington and Blücher occurred, it will be remembered, about nine o'clock in the evening, after the general and decisive advance of the allied army, and when the enemy were beaten at all points. The place of meeting was the cabaret named 'La Belle Alliance,' in and around which there had been fierce

fighting during the day, and which had at the last formed the centre of the French position. There was little time for more than a hurried greeting between the two commanders, and a few words settling clearly the course to be taken that the defeat might, if possible, be rendered final and irreparable.

The meeting was thus in itself one of serious import, and it was one marked out emphatically for pictorial representation on a worthy scale. It was the symbol and the consummation of the crowning victory of the great struggle on which depended the destinies of Europe. In it were concentrated at once the story of the past and a clear indication of the future. Something like this the painter has evidently felt. Plainly as a picture can do this enable you to read the story of the meeting at a glance: to read it, that is, as to its general purpose, but supplying by many broad indications, as well as refined subtleties of thought and expression, a deeper meaning, and along with all an infinite accumulation of secondary and subservient facts and suggestions which repeated examinations do not exhaust.

The picture occupies a panel on the right wall of the Royal Gallery, forty-six feet long and twelve high, the base line being eight feet from the ground. It contains fifty or sixty figures, those of the principal personages being about life-size, while those in the immediate foreground are much larger. From its size, shape, and position the eye cannot easily embrace the whole of the picture at once; and the artist has evidently taken this condition into account. Obviously a work like this, occupying so important a place in the palace of the legislature, should be monumental in character. The painter has made it so; but, attentive to its size and shape, he seems to have had in his mind a sculptural mode of treatment—to have regarded it in fact, if such an expression may be allowed, as a grand pictorial rilievo. And being monumental, he has determined to adhere strictly to historical truth. Of all the heroes of that day

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only those are represented who were actually present at the meeting. The portraits are from likenesses painted as near to the time as could be obtained. The actual uniforms and accoutrements—now all obsolete—were procured with inconceivable difficulty from all sorts of sources, private as well as public, and the national stores were of course freely open to him. In short, for every point of detail, as well as for all the leading particulars, the painter might cite as goodly an array of authorities as the most painstaking historian of this chapter of modern history. Indeed as regards the uniforms, weapons, &c., as Mr. MacLise has introduced a representative of nearly every British regiment that took part in the fight, the picture may come to have an independent interest for the military antiquary as an authentic record of the costumes of the British army in 1815.

His rendering of the meeting is after this fashion. The chiefs, with their respective staffs and escorts, occupy the centre of the picture. Behind them is the shattered cabaret. Beyond the secondary group of Prussian generals a Prussian band is marching in playing the national anthem, while the British cavalry—chiefly Lifeguards and Blues—are responding with uplifted swords by a military salute and a hearty cheer. In front, and on either hand, stretching away to the extremities of the picture, are the wounded and the dead, with the various incidents and details that belong to such a battle-field. Along the distant ridge of elevated ground the French are seen in rapid retreat, the artillery and covering cavalry skirmishing with the pursuing cavalry of the allies.

But with all this crowd of figures, variety, and bustle, there is a remarkable unity and repose. You feel at once that there is a break in the current of events—a momentary hush and pause. The eye turns instinctively to the central figure and rests long on it. So noble a presentation of the Duke does not, to our knowledge, elsewhere exist. It is no idealization, but a literal likeness of him in form, feature, and habit as he was on that day. And yet it is something more than a

mere likeness. The very mind of the man is shown in his form and face. He sits his horse with the calm self-possession of one used to command. He looks the conqueror, and as one who knows the greatness of the work that has been accomplished. But there is no parade, haughtiness, or lurking self-consciousness; no boastful or jubilant expression. His features are serious, thoughtful, even pensive. It is the face of the man who felt, as he said, that 'next to the pain of losing a great battle is that of winning one'; of him who deemed it no shame on his manhood to weep bitter tears that night as he thought of the many gallant comrades of whom the day had deprived him. Very finely discriminated, also, is the difference of character and expression in Wellington and Blücher. Blücher has ridden hastily up and is grasping eagerly the hand of Wellington. In his eye there is a gleam of savage delight, and on his features an expression that tells of long brooding over his country's wrongs and a pent-up passion for revenge, now triumphing in the assurance that the day of vengeance has at last come; but the utterance of the feeling is for the moment checked by observing the grave earnestness of the British general, whose emotion he scarcely understands and is incapable of appreciating.

Both Wellington and Blücher are plainly habited. Wellington is in the simple frockcoat, short cloak, and low plumeless cocked-hat he wore throughout the battle. In his hand he carries a small field-glass, and he rides his famous charger Copenhagen. The man, the dress, the sword-handle, and the glass; the charger, even the charger's bit and bridle, all are as they were on that day. Lawrence's and other portraits, painted the same or the following year, have supplied the features; Ward's portrait of Copenhagen, faithful to the animal's every point and almost every hair, is the authority for the horse; the dress and equipments were copied from the actual relics religiously preserved by the present duke. And so with Blücher; the rough foraging-cap is that worn by the grim old

marshal throughout the campaign—features, equipment; and cap being obtained at first hand from Berlin through the good offices of the late Prince Consort.

The respective staffs and escorts are of course in their full uniforms, and the gorgeousness of their costumes as they are massed together add greatly by the contrast to the simple dignity of the two plainly-dressed chiefs who have ridden a step in advance. The characters, national and personal, of the generals in attendance are discriminated with equal care, and their portraits have been ascertained with equal fidelity. On the English side are Lord Arthur Hill (afterwards Lord Sandys) and Lord Edward Somerset, and behind them Major Percy, who carried home the official despatch and the captured eagles. The group is completed by the escort, 2nd Life Guards, Blues, and Scots Greys, a band of noble fellows, admirably drawn, full of life, vigour, and purpose—British soldiers of the true stamp. They are represented saluting with raised swords, while a Guard and a Grey are holding aloft side by side a riddled British standard and a captured eagle. On the other side with Blucher, are Nostitz, his aide-de-camp, friend, and constant associate; Gneisenau, distinguished by his white plume; and Prince Frederick William (the late king) of Prussia in a dragoon's uniform, with a Brunswick Hussar beside him. Slightly separated from this group is another in which the foremost figure is the hardy old General Bulow, attended by Count Ziethen, and supported by the Prussian escort; whilst in front are Sir J. Vandeleur, the leader of the light brigade, and that *preux chevalier* Sir Hussey Vivian, habited in the showy uniform of the 11th Hussars, and mounted on a magnificent white charger.

For convenience we have spoken of these as separate groups, but they are, in fact, merely sections of the grand central group, a group admirably arranged both as regards perspicuity and pictorial effect. In like manner the remaining portions of the picture are broken into dis-

inct groups, so that a spectator walking from one end to the other finds, wherever he stops, a picture in a measure complete in itself; and yet each group is so united with its neighbour on either hand that none can be said to be independent of the rest, whilst all subserve the impressive singleness of the entire composition. These secondary groups are in their several ways full of power and pathos. On the right of the central group there is a cluster of stalwart fellows—footguards, Highlanders, dragoons—tending with feminine gentleness a wounded veteran, the duke's aide-de-camp, Colonel Canning. Above and a little to the right other commiserating soldiers are bearing off the 'young gallant Howard,' immortalized by Byron. Still farther back is a Belgian officer, his head supported by a friendly arm that he may receive the last services of his religion from a monk who is holding a crucifix to the dying man's lips. A sister of charity is looking on; whilst a buxom vivandière, with ready handiness, proffers a glass of eau-de-vie. This last is the only female fairly brought into view in the whole composition. Had the painter been a Frenchman he would have assuredly invested her with a *parfum de sentiment*. But Maelise has sternly put aside the temptation. He has made her a frank, pleasant-looking body; one a soldier would cheerfully spend his sous and pass his joke with when in health, and accept as readily aid and a pleasant word from when sick or wounded; but he has given her no opera-house sensibility. He has even estopped any excess of sympathy for her on the part of the spectator. On the gun carriage behind her she has set a chubby bright-eyed baby, who is playing with the stars and crosses the young mother has been stripping—why should not she as well as another?—from the breast of many a gallant soldier of either army; and lest the purpose should not be sufficiently clear, across there in the distance the painter lets us see a couple of Belgian peasant women busy at the same hideous occupation. At the extreme

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left of the composition is a soldier having his wounded leg dressed by army surgeons—a brave fellow who bears his pain without a murmur, though, as you see, it is very hard to bear, and he has not strength to push off from his shoulders the weight of the artillery officer who has fallen over the gun he has defended to the death. About this gun lie many a gallant fellow, the most conspicuous being a handsome French cuirassier, and a stalwart piper of the 95th, who has died of a musket wound in the breast after the tourniquet had been applied with a view to amputating his arm. Close by are a fusilier and Connaught ranger, and more towards the centre a group of Guards, all wounded, but cheering vociferously, for they have the duke full in view. In the immediate foreground are stretched sleeping their last sleep, a cuirassier, a trumpeter of the 2nd Life Guards, an officer of the Imperial Guard, an Enniskillener—and many another of 'the unreturning brave'—mingled heedlessly together, 'Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent.'

Yet, with all the piled-up horrors of that fearful carnage, there has been on the part of the artist the rarest reticence. The hideousness of war is sufficiently indicated as well as its magnificently stern array. The more repulsive features are concealed. The dead have died the death of heroes. Suffering bravely endured is shown, not the hideous disfigurement of manly forms. Wounds are not mawkishly kept out of sight, but neither are they paraded. And as the Duke's suggestion to Sir William Allan when he was about to paint a battle was, 'Don't put in too much smoke,' so from a military surgeon well acquainted with battle-fields MacLise has learnt to be sparing of blood. The gallant fellow who has succumbed to a bullet will scarce show a spot of blood on his manly chest.

In looking beyond the human figures of this wonderful composition, we see the same thoughtful working out of the idea of the painter. The cabaret is the background to the principal group. It

has been taken and retaken during the day; the walls are shattered, the roof beaten in, but there are the doves returned to their ark at the close of the day—though some of their number lie there victims to the fire. And notice how unassumingly the site of the meeting is indicated by the partly obliterated inscription on the cabaret, 'La Belle Alliance'; and the season, by that sprig of wild roses at your feet, which will probably escape notice unless you look for it; and the hour, by that soft crescent moon and the pale stars that reveal themselves one after another as you gaze on the cool evening sky. And, by the way, this indication of the time is what will probably suggest some criticism on the part of those who adopt what seems to be the painter's own theory of representing the scene with strict historical fidelity. It will be said—The hour of meeting was nine o'clock, and we know that Napoleon himself attributed the failure of some of his latest movements to the increasing darkness; yet there is a broad glow of light on Wellington and his companions, and every object in the field is distinctly visible. This is undoubtedly so, and it must be justified or explained—if capable of justification or explanation—either by the state of the atmosphere or as a painter's licence. As far as the light is concerned, the 18th of June is equivalent to the longest day. There is no night; the sun has gone down behind, but a little to the right of the spectator, and the western sky we feel is filled with a brilliant effulgence. Stand against the opposite wall, so as to take in the whole picture, and you will see that the glowing light on the central figures is reflected from the western sky, whilst a diffused light illumines the distant fields. Probably the light is stronger than it was in reality, but the painter had but a choice of difficulties, and he chose that which cost him by far the most labour, but, as we believe, improved the picture and added to the pleasure of the spectator.

In technical power and manipulative dexterity, this picture undoubtedly surpasses any of Mr.

MacLise's previous works. As a draftsman he has always taken a foremost place; and certainly his reputation will not be imperilled by his latest production. Looked at largely we might dwell on the skilful arrangement of the lines of the whole composition, and the adaptation to that general arrangement of each group and figure. In dealing with individuals, very noteworthy is the way in which is given the easy, upright carriage of the well-trained horsemen; the wonderful variety of quiet expression, as well as the intensity of that of pain and suffering; the mastery of form as shown in the attitudes of the dead and dying—notice especially such foreshortened and contorted figures as that, on the extreme left, of the artillery officer who has fallen dead across his gun, and the soldier who has expired in a death-struggle under his horse; and the clearly-marked distinction between the rigidity of those long dead, and the relaxed muscular system of those whose breath has scarcely departed. Nor less observable is the precision shown in rendering the form and character of the horse, from the fiery and impatient chargers of the generals, championing the bit, all eagerness for the fray, to the magnificently painted group where a cuirassier has been knocked over with his horse upon another horse and rider, dead or dying, and the noble animal is making frantic efforts to tear himself free.

A word must be given to the handling—the actual painting of the picture. Seen at a due distance the whole looks broad and effective in treatment—suggesting, indeed, least of all any thought of the painter's handiwork. Yet, in truth, every part is finished with a degree of patient labour which, in a work of such a size, and in which there is not a hand's-breadth unoccupied, it is almost fatiguing to contemplate. The heads of the more prominent personages are moulded with as much care, and much in the same manner, as in an elaborate chalk drawing, *hatching* being freely employed, and, what seldom happens in oil painting under any such

treatment, without any loss of fleshy character. The costumes are rendered with minute attention to every strap and button; drums, weapons, musical instruments, all sorts of military paraphernalia—and, indeed, the accessories of every kind—are finished with what seems superfluous elaboration, yet with perfect ease;—some portions, in truth, appearing to have been so done out of very wantonness, a mere playing with the pencil, *tours de force* elaborated with as much nicety as though parts of a cabinet painting of the Gerard Dow class. But with all, as we said, step back but a few feet from the picture and all appearance of labour is lost—you are conscious only of broad results, with perhaps the feeling of greater security as to verisimilitude.

In colour the work is a triumph as compared with the best of the modern frescoes. The general tone is low, but free from all tendency to blackness. A warm subdued light, the glowing depth of mid-summer twilight, pervades the whole. The various uniforms afford an ample range of resplendent hues, while the predominance of any one has been skilfully provided against, and all have been brought into a most agreeable accordance. Surface and texture are throughout rendered with exquisite truth, facility, and variety.

We might turn now to petty faults or shortcomings, and suggest points where we fancy the painter has seen less clearly than we have done; but we have no intention to do so. A work like this is too rare an achievement for us to care about spending upon it any small and carping criticism. It is beyond comparison the most successful mural painting yet executed in this country; and it is one in its class not likely to be speedily excelled. We heartily congratulate Mr. MacLise on the completion of such a picture, and the nation on its possession. The corresponding panel, on the opposite side of the gallery, Mr. MacLise has undertaken to fill with a companion picture, 'The Death of Nelson:' may it be as successful!

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Drawn by M. J. Lawless.

BEAUTY'S TOILETTE.

THE FINISHING TOUCH.

p. 265.

BRACEY'S TOILETTE.

The Sunday Crew.

'Twas early Monday morn'g, all the crew
 The day well spent, and the work well done,
 Repair her sails, and mend her gear,
 And sail, till all the morn'g of the day.

Lines of the 1st.

SHE stands before her mirror, and is glad
 Of a woman's trimmings, lightness, and her dress,
 Her dark eyes glisten, and her cheeks are red,
 That looks up, and down, and round, and round,
 A Queen of Beauty, she goes with a smile,
 Her sovereign empire over the world of the world.

12.

She looks on dress, and on the world of the world,
 She looks on dress, and on the world of the world,
 For if she looks a casual round, she
 The last new dress, and the last new dress,
 That he, whose hand has made the world of the world,
 May prove the sovereign power of the world.

13.

The latest mode is given, and the world of the world,
 The latest mode is given, and the world of the world,
 The latest mode is given, and the world of the world,
 A new dress, and the world of the world,
 That he, whose hand has made the world of the world,
 To show the world of the world of the world.

14.

All that is given, and the world of the world,
 To add the world of the world of the world,
 To give the world of the world of the world,
 And on the world of the world of the world,
 Is done, and the world of the world of the world,
 That says the world of the world of the world.



Painted by M. J. G. L. L.

BEAUTY'S VOILETES.

THE FINEST OF THEM.

BEAUTY'S TOILETTE :

The Finishing Touch.

' Now awful beauty puts on all its arms,
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face.'

Rape of the Lock.

I.

SHE stands before her mirror, and a flush
Of conscious triumph lightens o'er her face;
Her dark eye gathers splendour from the blush
That floods her cheek with more resistless grace :
A Queen of Beauty, she goes forth to prove
Her sovereign empire o'er the realms of Love!

II.

She hath no dream of universal sway ;
She seeks no conquests now for conquest's sake ;
For if she bids a vassal crowd obey,
'Tis but assurance doubly sure to make
That he, whose love her kingdom were alone,
May prove the foremost pillar of her throne.

III.

The latest touch is given ; the cherished flower
Flashes its creamy whiteness in her hair ;
The *négligé*, an amulet of power,
A *gage d'amour*, upon her bosom fair
Hangs like the glove upon some knightly crest,
To show whose ensign she approveth best !

IV.

All that consummate taste and art can do,
To 'add fresh perfume to the violet,'
To give the opening rose a lovelier hue,
And on the diamond brighter rays beget,
Is done : the rush of parting wings we hear,
That says Belinda's sylphs have finished here !

ODD LETTERS TO A LONDON EDITOR.

A GRAVE, middle-aged, grey-haired man, sitting at a pedestal-table in a dingy and disorderly-looking room into which only the very faintest gleams of the afternoon light have entered. Scattered heaps of letters are before him; on his left hand is a correspondence clip; at his feet is a basket intended for the reception of waste paper. There is a pair of scissors within easy reach, and the grey-haired, middle-aged man calmly takes them up and begins to open his letters with the dexterity and the nonchalance of a fishmonger's assistant who is opening oysters. For long practice has made him steady of hand and sure of eye: he knows exactly where to cut and how to cut every envelope that comes under the dulled blade, so as to save his own time and spare the letters before him from all wanton and unnecessary injury. He has already opened some ninety or a hundred, and the process has been performed with so much celerity and neatness that we begin to think he might almost take out a patent for himself, as a machine capable of executing any amount of such mechanical work in the shortest possible time.

But now comes a mental process: the ninety or a hundred letters have to be read. And this difficult task is performed quite as rapidly, quite as noiselessly, quite as neatly as the other. As John Caspar Lavater could read the human countenance at a glance, so this grey-haired gentleman appears capable of perusing whole pages of note-paper, letter-paper, and foolscap-paper with a few rolls of the eye and twitchings of the mouth. Certainly not more than five minutes have elapsed, and already he has read through eight or ten long and wearisome-looking letters, most of which seem to have been written by the feet of wandering gad-flies recently escaped from a blacking-bottle. How does he manage? Is he another Joseph Balsamo? a nineteenth century Nostradamus? a modern Jerome Cardan? a second William Lilly? or the great Zadkiel

himself, devoid of robes, pointed hat, and magic wand?

There is something almost irritating in the quick and yet deliberate manner in which he performs his work. All the letters he is reading are addressed to him, but in not one does he seem to take the slightest interest. Yet one writer tells him he is a dunce, a blockhead; that he is utterly without principle, and that he merits the scorn and loathing of every right-thinking man. It has not the least effect upon him. Another writer eulogises him with extravagant adulation as the saviour of his country, a benefactor of the entire human race; not the faintest flush of modesty passes over his cheek. Praise and blame, threats and wheedlings, commands and entreaties, all are alike to him. He reads on with a calm impassibility which looks like indifference, but which is in reality critical intelligence disciplined into the closest concentration. In truth, he has made good use of his time: he has been in the room not much more than an hour, and already his work is finished.

Let us introduce ourselves, therefore, to this grave and industrious gentleman, whose labours we have hitherto foreborne to disturb. He is no longer grave now though, for as he rises from his chair, and comes up to the corner in which we have placed ourselves out of the way, there are so many smiles upon his face—smiles breaking up ever and anon into smirks—that if he were suddenly and without warning to dig us violently in the ribs, or balance the paper-cutter on his nose, or give us some lyrical information about ‘The Cure,’ we could scarcely be more surprised than we are at the change which has taken place in the expression of his countenance. And yet, after all, why should we be surprised? Our friend is but mortal; he is editor, in fact, of a London daily paper, and a portion of his day's labour being completed, it is but natural that he should feel relieved in mind and reflect that feeling in his outward

aspect. He has been silent and absorbed hitherto, but now is ready to crack a joke if we like, or to gossip upon the news of the day, or to talk politics with us a while if such is our mood.

No, we don't want to crack any jokes, or to listen to any mere gossip, or to enter into any political discussion: we simply want our friend to tell us something about the occupation in which he has been engaged. Is that all? Well, then, he has been opening the day's letters 'to the editor' he informs us, and those he found suitable for publication he placed under the clip; the rest were thrown into the waste-paper basket. We look upon the table as he speaks: only eight or nine letters have been promoted to the place of honour; the rest are in the basket, ignominiously thrust there before being subjected to yet more contemptuous treatment.

Let us begin by examining the correspondence secured within the close embrace of the clip. 'The Charge of Forgery against a Solicitor,' 'Lisbon Telegraph,' 'Distresses in Bethnal Green,' 'Woolwich Academy,' 'Hartley Colliery Accident,' 'Overcharges on Railways,' 'Assassination in the Papal States;' such are the subjects treated by the writers. Not bad subjects, it may be, and, as topics of the day, possessed of a certain amount of interest; but if we wait until to-morrow we shall read all about them, no doubt, in the paper; so let us pass away from the clip and see what the waste-paper basket contains.

We wondered a short time since at the rapidity with which our friend executed his work; we overflowed with bilious envy when we noted the almost preternatural dexterity with which he distinguished the publishable from the unpublishable, the epistolary grain from the epistolary husks. Our wonder sensibly diminishes, and our envy gives place to respectable self-satisfaction when we discover of what materials the great mass of the rejected letters are composed.

Mr. Editor turns the basketful of letters upon the table, and we both sit down to examine them. 'Look

here,' says our friend; 'you know, and it might have been supposed all the world would know, that a London daily paper does not give a long string of "Answers to Correspondents," like the "Family Herald" or the "Weekly Dispatch." What we may come to ultimately, in these days of penny journals, I don't know; but at all events we remain at present much as we used to be, and yet we continually receive such letters as this,' and he hands us the following epistle:—

'Sir,—Will you please state through the medium of your valuable paper whether the maiden name or the name of the late husband of a widow lady is proper to use for wedding cards, and oblige

Yours, &c.'

'While he was about it, I wonder this gentleman did not ask me if it would be proper to marry in top boots, or quite *en règle* to take his coat as well as his hat off upon entering the church,' says our friend, sarcastically, and then passes to us another letter. This, too, is from a correspondent whose mind is evidently in an unsettled state, and who wants a little information of a thoroughly practical and utilitarian character. Thus it runs:—

'I shall be truly obliged to you as a constant reader of your invaluable paper if you can inform me as soon as possible what will take grease out of the cover of a red cloth bound book without removing the colour.'

'This kind of letter is always from a "Constant Reader,"' says Mr. Editor, who still remains good-humouredly satirical, 'and there is no question, however absurd or however trivial, that the Constant Reader will not ask. He is my nightmare, my *bête noire*, my evil genius. I don't suppose he looks at the paper once a month, and yet he calls himself a Constant Reader, and on the strength of that self-bestowed literary title, seems to think he has unnumbered claims upon my time, my memory, and my books of reference, which I am bound in honour to satisfy. If he were to ask me to take tea with him some day at Shepherd's Bush, or to stand as godfather to his tenth child, or to go down to Herefordshire and give my opinion upon the little bit of land

he had bought there, or to lend him five shillings, or to advance him sufficient capital to start in the oil and colour line, or to forward him a prescription for the measles, or to tell him whether I know anything about his brother who went to India and who has not been heard of since 1805, or if I think pork sausages indigestible when eaten for supper, or to give him my impartial opinion as to the probability of his wife having twins, I should not be in the least surprised:—

'Look,' he adds, 'here is one of these gentlemen with a very simple request, and whose orthography is primitive enough to find favour with Lord Malmesbury himself:—

'I shall Feel Greatly Obligated to you if you can inform me where i can get a receipt for making Lemon Rasbury and Other Syrups and Sweet Warters and if there is a receipt for making Syder without Apples ancer in your next Correspondent will Greatly Oblidge a

CONSTANT READER.'

'There,' exclaims Mr. Editor, triumphantly, 'did I not tell you so? This very modest correspondent, not content with asking me how to concoct lemon syrups and other sweet warters, actually wishes me to tell him how to make cyder without apples! It's a wonder he did not ask me if it is possible altogether to dispense with malt and hops in brewing pale ale, and whether a good crop of oats cannot be raised without previously sowing seed. But here is a third Constant Reader, who, like many other constant readers, is tormented with a gnawing desire to see me, and who, having been denied that gratification, evidently believes he has a cause of complaint against me which is almost actionable. Listen to his letter:

'To the editor. I have Been A Constant Reader of your paper for the Last 3 years and i Brought Some rascality To you Last night which I wished to Be published But I dont see it in to days paper I Came with it myself and Brought the Card for you to see it But your porter said I Could not see without an appointment But as it Contains the whole Truth as I have Been Served I hope you will publish it or I will get it in some other paper.

'P.S. I Leaved it with your porter myself and he said he would give it to you.'

Mr. Editor, now fairly roused into loquacity, begins to describe to us the peculiarities of other letters continually addressed to him. A large number of people will insist, he says, in writing to him upon the mere business arrangements of the paper, with which, of course, he has no concern. One wants to know the cost of advertising, another the rate of subscription, and a third the price of the journal 'if a dozen copies are taken at once.' Then he shows us a curiously crumpled and ink-spotted epistle, dog's-eared and greasy, he has received that day from a correspondent who dates from a great suburban thoroughfare she calls the 'harer rode,' and who is thus explicit in the expression of her requirements:—

'Sir i shoold Be glad if you wood let me now wat the expence is to hadvetize for washing and ironing as you dont publish the price.'

'And now,' says our friend, 'I have a curiosity to show you. It is a letter from Jeames. Here it is, as you see, written on pink note-paper, evidently of Paris origin, and highly scented with Ess bouquet. It is the first the worthy fellow has favoured me with for a long time, and certainly if I merely consulted my own judgment it should be promoted to the clip, and enjoy the honours of publication. Jeames, as you will see, has a complaint against our friend the "Times;" and note the style in which he gives expression to it. Could Mr. Thackeray write half as well? For see how cruelly critical, how mischievously witty, and how indignantly eloquent is Jeames as he lashes the "Times" for its mean-spirited, nay dastardly injustice towards flunkydome and yellow plush. If I published this letter, Printing-house Square would never survive the blow:—

'Sir a short time since when the times ware about to reduce its paper from 5 pence to 4 pence it ware Published every Morning in front of its leader until it became a by word and onley stopt after being rapt on the knuckles by the venerable Punch—now Sir let any one look over the times and see if they can find where it informs servants that their advertisements will rise on and after so and so no air not untill the get to the office do the find out this sneaking inno-

vation of their pockets; it occurs to me in comparing the former to the latter that its very like an omnibus with the word 3 pence for such a distance and immediately under with the words almost obliterated such a distance 6 pence this being the second time advertisements have risen under 2 years I would call upon all servants to resist this increasing Monopoly and if the times does not pay let them rise the price of the paper so that the may bear the burden that is most able by inserting this you will oblige one who as already advertised in your paper.'

'Some of my correspondents,' continues Mr. Editor, 'send me little scraps of news, out of pure good feeling, I believe, and without the slightest desire for remuneration; news of the most trivial character, encumbered with the weight of utterly superfluous details. For instance, the other day I received four closely-written pages of letter-paper—from a hodman or paviour, as I should judge by the style—the entire purport of which was that a young man living at Hackney Wick had promised to marry a young girl living at Ball's Pond, and that just before the marriage was to take place, the intended husband basely and surreptitiously quitted the greengrocer's shop in which he had been an assistant, and had not since been heard of. To-day I have received a piece of intelligence almost equally interesting. Here it is, look at it, and judge for yourself:—

'Sir you would greatly Oblige me By Inserting the Accompanying letter as soon as possible in your daily paper.

*** A MYSTERIOUS PARCEL.**

'Sir. On Tuesday (November 26th) a Parcel was sent to the residence of [name and address given in original] and left in charge of his Landlady (he being a single man) for him. On his opening it It was found to contain What? A Baby.

'It may be a little comfort to the Anxious Mother to know that it is progressing very favourably under its new Nurse.'

'But my most persevering and original correspondents are the mad people,' says our friend, when he has disposed of this mysterious parcel. 'They write to me incessantly upon every variety of subject and in every variety of style. Sometimes they are tolerably coherent and intelligible, and I obtain thus a faint

glimmering of their meaning; but in the vast majority of cases they are as hopelessly crackbrained as Lodowick Muggleton, who doomed every one to perdition that would not believe the sun was only four miles from the earth. What can I say, for instance, to a gentleman who very modestly informs me that he believes himself to be "the spirit of Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending," and who expresses himself to the following effect? Here our friend takes from the heap a letter he has for some time had his eye upon, and reads:—

'Sir. Having read an article in your Paper of Yesterday I take the Liberty of Making a few remarks on the same. In the first Place the world has already been tried in righteousness and where is there one that has not broke the ten Commandments. Not one and those Open Air Preachers well know the Same. They Likewise know by what means your Merchants and Manufacturers and Tradesmen accumulate there wealth. I will tell Thee how it is done it is done by Secret Contract they have bartered their Souls happiness hereafter for present worldly gain and they know not what an hour may bring forth have they been Deceived or is it Gold they alone worship it is not for me to say Such is the cause of the small attendance at Our Churches and not to be surprised at Pity they do not know better This much I know they must not think lightly of the scriptures for its no-vel reading not novel reading understand that.'

'Most of these mad gentlemen,' continues Mr. Editor, 'have an extreme desire to make my personal acquaintance, to see me, if only for the briefest period. Ah! if I would give them five minutes! One would square the circle; another would prove by undeniable evidence that the earth is a plane; a third would give me some exclusive and important information respecting the Seventh Vial. If I would but spare them only five minutes, what mysteries they would unravel; what secrets they would unfold; what disclosures they would make!

'Of course I never do give them the five minutes. Perhaps I already unravel quite as many mysteries as I care for; perhaps the police courts supply me with a sufficient number of startling disclosures; perhaps I

am growing stout and stupid. However it may be, I turn a deaf ear to the appeals of my mad correspondents; and when I ought to be closeted with them, all anxiety to learn some great truth by which humanity is to be saved and truffled turkey brought home to every man's door, I am quietly engaged with my chop and glass of pale ale, utterly indifferent to the advantages I am losing.

"You must not suppose, however, that these imaginative correspondents fail to announce many great truths to me, notwithstanding the neglect with which I treat them. A few months ago I continually received, for a full fortnight, the following startling information, which I was evidently at liberty to publish if I pleased:—

"THE QUEEN WILL DIE

on the Fifth of June.

Keep this."

"I did not keep it, however: it shared the usual fate, and was basketed with the rest. Then, too, I have a most industrious correspondent who sends me under envelope two or three cards every morning full of devices infinitely stranger than that upon the famous banner in Longfellow's poem. Of course there must be some deep and stupendous meaning in the remarks upon these cards; but I give you my word of honour I have never yet been able to discover it. Here are a couple; see what you can make of them."

"Of course we can make nothing of a couple of pages of maundering rubbish, in which the words have as little connection as those read down the page of a dictionary.

"There!" said our friend, after he has shown us the said very rational productions. "What do you think of them? Would not "Ride a Cock Horse," or "Hey Diddle Diddle" be agreeable and refreshing, if not dignified and elevating after such unintelligible hurry-scurry? Well! you have seen now a few specimens of the letters I throw into the basket every day. It is true, all are not so bad as these I have read to you. The great mass, if tolerably pure in style, and free from the grosser grammatical errors, are nevertheless

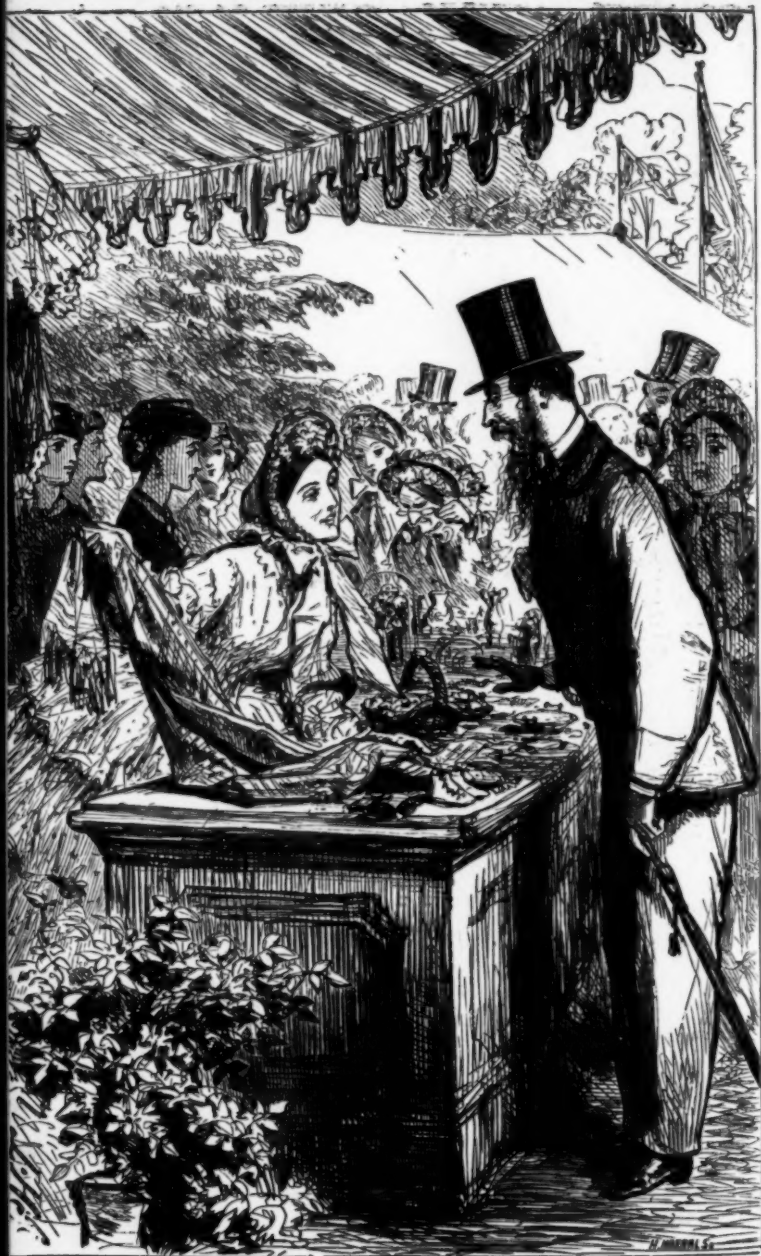
commonplace and uninteresting, full of slipshod ideas and second-hand opinions. Emphatically, there is nothing in them. We have a stirring leader, for instance, to-day upon the American question. On the morrow "Brutus Secundus," or "Hampton the Younger," sends us a long rignmarole merely echoing our statements and reflecting our views. He is rejoiced to see that we have such a just appreciation of the real merits of the question at issue. He "hails with delight" our strictures upon the conduct of the North, while "cordially agreeing" with us in our censure of the South. He echoes with all his heart our wish to see terminated what we have so "appropriately termed" a fratricidal contest; and finally, he is sure we express the feelings of the entire nation in declaring that the honour of the British flag must be maintained at all hazards. By inserting his letter we shall of course greatly oblige him; and he remains ours, most obediently, &c. What can we do with such a letter? When we are really in want of matter—which rarely happens—we sometimes print it, to fill up, but more frequently we throw it into the basket. Depend upon it, every correspondent who sends us anything worth having is sure to meet with attention. But the number of such correspondents is comparatively small.

"And now I hope you see how it is the basket is so full every day. The great mass of my correspondents doubtless think they are scandalously treated, and picture me as a surly, snarling, puffy, overgrown, querulous, carping, dogmatical, hypercritical cynic, utterly devoid of all sound judgment and human feeling. If they could fill my post for a week or two perhaps they would form a more charitable opinion of me."

We shake our friend by the hand and assure him that at all events our good opinion is secured to him. And as we leave his dull, half-lighted room, and grope our way down the well-trodden staircase that leads to the street, we have a more friendly feeling towards editors generally than we have entertained before.

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Drawn by George Thomas.

THE FANCY FAIR.

p. 271.

THE BERRY TAIL.

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THE FANCY FAIR.

‘ Indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad, and it therefore behoves men to be wary.’

SHAKSPEARE.

I.

PERHAPS. I may as well concede,
Now that the thing is over,
A Fancy Fair may have its care,
And not its seat in clover.
I had to worry all my friends,
And beg from my relations,
Who only sent me odds and ends,
And hoped for invitations.

II.

I’d little misses’ brodequins,
And little masters’ blouses,
And little *boîtes* for little pins,
And darling babies’ ‘shoeses’;
And sachets with divine perfume,
And *sacs* of work and leather;
That make such litter in a room
When mingled altogether.

III.

At length the day of days came round,
And who could then feel spiteful!
A task that may begin a bore,
May end in being delightful:
The busy hum like honey-bees;
The jesting and the laughter;
The whispering among the trees,
The soft breeze whispering after.

IV.

The Coldstream band struck up an air
Electrified all dancers;
Sweet ‘Rosalie the Prairie Flower,’
And ‘Love among the Lancers’;
I took my place behind my stall,
I looked as blithe and sunny
As though I never thought at all
Of such base things as money.

V.

A little *ruse* I improvised
(I wish such tales were true),
What heaps of trash I ‘sacrificed,’
‘As made by ‘You know who!’
The Cymons quite besieged my stall,
And helped my poor invention;
I smiled, and hinted to them all,
‘Friends’ names I might not mention!’

VI.

At length lounged up young Millionaire,
With voice as sweet as honey—
‘As poor as any Prodigal,’
‘Cleaned out,’ and ‘Got no money;’

With all the stuff such people prate,
And think so vastly clever;
I made him buy a hideous scarf,
And hate him worse than ever!

VII.

Poor Cousin Charlie from behind
(That youth is growing bolder!)
Said, with his short sardonic laugh,
In whispers o'er my shoulder—
(I give his own vernacular,
You know I never heed him)—
'I see you've nailed yon fatted calf,
So do your best to bleed him!'

VIII.

Mamma put on her spectacles—
Perhaps she saw but blindly;
When Isaac Walton baited hooks
You know he did it 'kindly';
I tried to do the self-same thing,
I put on airs and graces,
Because the art of selling well
Is making civil faces!

IX.

And now I've done my very best,
Been grateful to each corner,
I think I've fairly earned my rest,
Like any other mummer;
My *porte-monnaie* is gorged with gold;
I've neither loves nor quarrels;
I'll do as people did of old,
Repose upon my laurels!

Z.

THE GRUMBLER'S CORNER.

TO THE EDITOR OF 'LONDON SOCIETY.'

SIR,
ATTRACTED by the title of your Magazine, we purchased the first number, in hopes of finding a corner reserved for the grumbles of those who feel themselves aggrieved by various usages of society, which are extremely onerous, and to obtain the abolition of which would be to confer a real blessing on that class of persons who are supposed to be exempt from every social evil—we of course allude to the class of bachelors.

If you will grant a small space to our complaint, we propose to call your attention to two especial grievances, and to beg your influ-

ence and help in getting rid of them. The first of these is one from which married men are generally free; and the prospect of immunity from it which matrimony offers is quite enough to account for any number of imprudent unions. In fact, we have often observed that married men, in calculating the advantages of their position, reckon amongst the very first the fact that they now delegate to their wives the duty which was so troublesome to them once. Without further preface, we will add that the grievance to which we here allude is that of card-leaving. We don't complain of *bonâ fide* calls, made in hopes of

finding at home friends whom we wish to see and converse with, but we are protesting against the cruel farce of travelling miles for the sole purpose of leaving cards at the houses of such of our acquaintance as we wish merely to remind of our existence when it could be done in a much simpler way.

Married men, as we said before, leave these things to their wives, who enjoy the arrangement exceedingly. But there is no plan by which the unhappy bachelor can perform this duty, except at great personal expense and toil. The majority of men one meets with in ordinary London society are more or less engaged up to four o'clock; consequently, if a man's visiting acquaintances are scattered over London, he is obliged to make repeated expeditions in Hansom cabs: first of all to let them know that he is yet alive and in London, and that he will be happy to form one of the crowd about to throng their drawing-rooms; and then, when that pleasure is over, to acknowledge the honour conferred on him. In fact, the necessity of leaving cards is an incubus which weighs heavily on the soul of every unfortunate bachelor whom inclination or a sense of duty urges into society. The remedy is simple and obvious. What objection could there be to transmitting cards by post? It would surely answer every purpose as well as knocking at a door, and thrusting your card into the hands of a powdered footman, and bolting. If society would consent to receive cards by post we are sure that bachelors would not prove ungrateful for the boon. The second grievance to which we allude is, that a bachelor is never allowed to know when he is old enough to give up dancing, and to leave such an amusement to more youthful competitors. After thirty very few men care about dancing in the least: they would personally avoid it if they could. But that is

no easy matter. If they have dined at the house of Mrs. A—, or Mrs. B—, they are well aware that if they wish to be asked to dinner again they must not fail to present themselves at the ball which those ladies will probably give during the season. They present themselves to their hostess, and in compliance with her request may have joined a few dances, in hopes of purchasing for the rest of the evening a little peace. But, no; it cannot be allowed by any means. By virtue of their unattached condition a duty devolves upon them, which they must discharge. There sit rows of young ladies, lovely in wreaths and muslin, who are longing to dance, and it seems churlish to refuse to make them happy when pressed to do so. The consequence is, that men spend the evening in dodging their hostess, who is bent on catching them, or yield to their fate with the best grace they can assume.

Nor is Darwin's theory of natural selection allowed in drawing-rooms. If the victim is a very tall man he is generally consigned to some *petite* whose waist he can just manage to reach by bending double. If he is a very short man he will probably find himself standing on the tips of his toes, attempting to encircle the waist of some fair Juno who towers above him by a head and shoulders. And as the lookers-on watch his frantic efforts to control the rush of his partner through the mazy waltz, they have an opportunity of observing the sublime but ridiculous sight of a brave man struggling with his destiny—for it will be his destiny to be obliged to dance until he becomes incapacitated by old age, or is absolutely driven into matrimony. Feebly, sir, as we have portrayed these grievances, we hope you will kindly afford space for the insertion of the lament of

A BRACE OF BACHELORS.

SOCIETY IN CELTIC LONDON.

THE head-quarters of the Peninsular and Occidental Company had, for many ages anterior to the fifth century before Christ, been fixed on the easternmost shore of the Mediterranean; and the western limits of the trading voyages of its liners had been the ports of Southern Spain, and the Cassiterides or Tin Islands of Britain. Tyre had at this time lost the prestige of virgin splendour and impregnability; and had suffered an instalment of those woes which had been denounced against her in scatheful, prophetic numbers. Thanks, however, to the elasticity of her reproductive powers, she was again the great mart of nations, the city of merchant princes. Her borders were again strong in the midst of the sea; and her visage, once perfect, restored to its pristine beauty in all but this—that when she smiled, the scar left by Babylon deepened into furrow, and the actual shadow of the Persian sceptre fell dark and strong upon her when she looked defiant. She was yet a merchant of the people to many isles; yet her vessels bore over the waters the revenues of distant kings; yet she clothed her people in purple and fine linen; and yet ‘she heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.’

Say it is a day of the year B.C. 450, and both day and year are in their spring-time. An off-shore breeze is liberating the argosies that have been wind-bound in the harbour. As they row seaward, sheet after sheet is loosened, flapping to the gale. Alongside, prow by prow, oar by oar, stroke by stroke, in stately march, move out the ‘Phoenix’ and the ‘Hiram,’ presently, with mutual cheers, to part, the one for Egypt, and the other, *via* Cyprus and Rhodes, for Smyrna. Third, and unfellowed, follows the ‘Ashtaroth,’ the crack ship of the Tyrian P. and O. flotilla. Her crew are picked men of Sidon, Aco, and Tyre; and her cargo, whatever of most precious Asia has to give to Europe. Her timbers are of Senir

fir-wood; her masts are cedars from the Libanus; her oars are of oak of Bashan; her benches and hatches of ivory of the Isles of Chittim; her sails of fine linen, with embroidered work of Egypt; and her awnings of scarlet and purple. An image of the goddess after whom she is named adorns her prow—that same *Dea Syria* who afterwards came to draw so widely on the popular piety of the Roman world, when her priests, drunken vagabond hypocrites, of the morals and social standing of modern gipsies, wandered about with a miserable ass on whose back was borne aloft, in awful state, a dingy, tawdry doll-divinity, in whose name faithful rustics were invited, to the accompaniment of Phrygian airs on castanets and cymbals, to contribute their alms of small money and broken victuals. The good ship leaves port to the festive sound of song and harp; and an inquisitive stranger from Halicarnassus sees her go.* First, with her miscellaneous

* Sees, but does not see. The truth is, that Herodotus—for it is he whom we identify in the Halicarnassian stranger—has come to Tyre to inspect a famous temple of Hercules, which is still fresh and awful from the ages of remotest legendary antiquity. His speculations, as he saunters by the harbour, are so fixed upon its pillars of fine gold and emerald which make night divinely lustrous, that he omits to indulge his wonted universal curiosity. The fact that he has left no information about the Cassiterides, except that they were situated somewhere or anywhere in the uttermost parts of the western world, is an incidental voucher for the success with which the Phœnician merchants, jealous of a profitable monopoly, enforced upon their navigators a sacred obligation to silence. If the Father of History had tipped the bold black-eyed sailor whom he dreamily jostled by the dock-side, that ancient mariner, anxious to secure his bribe at the same time that he kept his oath, might, *more nautico*, have spun him such an inventive yarn as would glowingly have taken the place of the historian’s bald notices of the Tin Islands and the Lands of the Celt. Seriously, it is possible that it was because the time and attention of Herodotus, during his stay at Tyre, were so taken up with the elabora-

cargo, she makes for Piræus, the maritime emporium of Athens, to which, amongst other commodities of use and luxury, she carries a consignment of Hebrew slaves, kidnapped for Grecian markets. From the Piræus, she steers for Carthage, the Tyre of Africa. Then further to the west, impelled over the blue waters of the tideless sea, she passes the Pillars of Hercules, and pays a commercial visit to Gades, another Tyrian colony, founded in discharge of the command of ancient oracles. Leaving the abundant springs of the silver-bedded Tartessus, whose mouth breathes to the western ocean the fragrance wafted from banks which hide themselves under orange groves, she sets forth to scale the shifting mountains of the Atlantic. Northward, and northward ever, past Finisterre, till at length another Land's End looms through the haze, and the *Ultima Thule*—of her voyage at least—is reached, and harbour made on the southern coast of Cornwall or of Ireland.

We have two or three reasons for introducing the foregoing epitome of the log of the 'Ashtaroth' into a paper titled like the present. The Phœnicians, and they only of all the civilized world of that day, knew of the whereabouts of Britain. For perhaps more than five hundred years before the particular voyage we now immortalize, they had traded with the Silures and the Dumnonii, to whom they brought salt, earthenware, brass, chains, necklaces, and other knicknacks of civilization, and took, in return, wool, skins, lead, and tin, the latter of which then ranked in the high places of the world as the foremost and most valuable of the metals. But further, these princely merchants, in thus repairing to the people of Britain, were

visiting their own kinsmen—their poor relations—who had, perhaps, whilst national organization presented only the airy cohesion of nomadic hordes, gone off from their primitive Asiatic seats in the direction of the setting sun, leaving another body of their race to consolidate itself in the country between Libanus and the Mediterranean. From this district the westward-going pioneers, some of whom had wandered as far as utmost Europe, had been ever and anon reinforced by stragglers, or sparsely colonized by exodes rendered compulsory by the aggression of the Israelites upon the inland borders of their Phœnician brethren. These, pressed and excited into an amphibious activity, had developed an enterprise which in time had made their treasury the riches of the world. Such also, in part, may have been the causes, which, in their operation, lined the coasts and sprinkled half the islands of the Mediterranean with a people whose mother-tongue was one of which, for want of anything better or nearer, the Erse has been regarded as the closest surviving representative. We are not going to flounder amongst ethnological probabilities; we are not going to deny all or any of the hypotheses which derive the primitive inhabitants of Britain from Gaul, Germany, Greece, Egypt, or even from the moon, if any one likes to take up the theory of a remote lunarian immigration, darkly suggested by the knowing gravedigger in Hamlet. Still less are we desirous of throwing discredit upon the touching, venerable tradition of the Britons themselves, that they were island-born. Only we may postulate a greater or less community of blood between the Briton and the Tyrian; or, if that be disallowed, intimate how such a community might be supported by the lingering evidence, long drawn out, of community of rite and superstition; of topographical and theological nomenclature, if not of entire language or dialect.

Now it is all very well for the commander of the 'Ashtaroth,' and the supercargo, and the influential P. and O. director's son, who is out

tion of that theory of the twofold Hercules, which gives profundity to the 44th and 45th chapters of his 'Euterpe,' that his knowledge of the regions beyond Calpe and Abyla was so hazy. It would not be wonderful if in those days, historically as well as commercially, Britain had to suffer for the mythical suggestiveness and the material grandeur of the Phœnician city.

to see the world, to land at their own sweet wills, either on the shore of that bay on which stands the town lately and loyally transformed from Cove of Cork to Queenstown, or to make for the Cornish harbour which best suits their purpose. They, it is presumed, know what they are about, and will not seriously imperil the safety of their persons, which, precious to themselves, are also sacred to the supple-witted people of the coast as the incarnations of profit, as the angels of salt, hardware, and bracelets. But where shall an amateur voyager, undefended by the tutelary god of traffic, find a safe landing-place? Shall he essay Ierne? Its gentle inhabitants affectionately inter their defunct parents by mouthfuls; and for a breakfast, make light of half a stone of flesh which itself has been heretofore quickened and enriched by the juices of its kind. Oh! delicate reader—alas! too delicate and delicately flavoured—beware of the Erin of the fifth ante-Christian century. Betray not the trusting, unsophisticated native to his own disaster. Accustomed to brawn and savage thews, he would with difficulty assimilate the finer tissues of a dish in which you should play the distinguished part of principal ingredient. About you an ethereal soupçon of mental culture subtly lingering, might, whilst it whetted his habitually unpampered appetite, inflict upon him a troubled digestion, or even invite nightmare and hideous dreams in which he should profanely doubt the favour of his gods. If, apart from considerations of tenderness to the hypothetical dyspeptic, you have any personal scruples to piecemeal sepulture in half a dozen living mausolea, it is manifest that not the clamouring echoes of Biscay hazards so lately escaped, nor yet the pleaded weariness of a tedious voyage ought to prevail upon us to land you here.

Even the inhabitants, comparatively refined, of Cornwall and Devon are, to persons unaccustomed to approach them, as docile as wolves would be in the flesh, first joy of freedom from the pious restrictions of a lupine lent; and what charms have you to soothe the savage breast?

You are no Sidonian mariner to make your peace with twopenny ornaments and *bric-à-brac*; no Tyrian skipper to pay black mail in the shape of a cast-off purple mantle in which some gigantic chief—enfolded the well-arched hugeness of his chest and veiling the noble sinuities of his legs, beautifully and in the true spirit of adventure receding from each other into the spaces of the outer world—shall grandly strut, as struts to-day on the fevered strand of tropical Africa, his majesty Quashsee, in regalia of napless cocked hat and tarnished epaulets. Let us leave the island at its anchorage to ride out a quarantine of a couple of centuries. It will by that time be a little purified from its taint of blood; and we will then land, not upon a sterile spur of Cornwall, but on the banks of Tamessa, now royal-towered Thames, and crowned with the diadems of kingdoms from Columbia to Ceylon; of lands that hibernate beneath the stolid stare of Boötes, or that open genially out to the mild gaze of the Southern Cross.

Here two or three grave considerations meet us—meet us, but do not appal. First we are conscious that our dramatic spectacle is proceeding in violation of the unities. But since Voltaire is dead, and his school of criticism buried with full rites and jubilant requiem, we are not sleeplessly anxious upon that score. The difficulty of ascertaining the social condition of the islanders of Britain before their country first became generally known to the world, is a weightier matter. Their comparative culture or rudeness has been debated with much bitterness and decision; with much philosophically indifferent assertion and quasi-patriotic denial; and is even yet a *questio vexata*. We deftly avoid the necessity of partisanship by fixing on a time for our visit when the most enthusiastic of philo-British apologists, making due allowance for the operation of the laws of progress, or rather reading these backwards to arrive at our selected era, dare not cavil if we discover a state of society for the most part such as has been handed down by

ancient annalists and geographers. There is, in addition, a topographical quarrel, touching not only, as in strictness it should, the precise locality, but even the very existence of London before the time of Caesar. If any one has a fancy for the *pros* and *cons* of this discussion, we wish him joy, and relegate him to authors aridly and voluminously conversant with the subject. We have done all that our duty and the wishes of most readers can impose, when we profess to have struck the balance of arguments, and decided, in conformity with evidence direct or inferential, that the London of the third century before Christ is to be found on both sides of the river.* Adventuring to visit the city of the northern bank, the heart of which may be represented by the neighbourhood of the railway terminus in Fenchurch Street, we should find ourselves the guests of the Trinobantes. Crossing the river, and allowing our skin-covered boat of wattles to drift a little with the rising tide, we should have an opportunity of saluting the Cantii—a people favoured not only, as the Trinobantes, by such communication with more civilized nations as the Thames affords, but by influences of humanizing intercourse which, working up from the southern and eastern coasts, make the New Cut the site of ideal British refinement.

* Apropos of London, did the reader ever see two books that independently agreed to give the same etymology of the name? Here are a few specimens of what human ingenuity can furnish as *probabilia* in a doubtful case. London has been deduced from *Caer Lud*, or *Lud's Town*; from *Luna*, another name for *Diana*; from *Lindus*, a city of *Rhodes*; from *Lygdus*, a Celtic prince; from *Llan Dyn*, temple of *Diana*; from *Lundain* or *Llandain*, the Thames bank town; from the British word *Llwnn*, a wood, and *Dinas*, a town; and, once more, from *Llong*, a ship, and *Dinas*, a town, the compound of course implying that it is a town or harbour for ships. In such a case a highly polished exhibitor of curiosities would, in tones of insinuation and endearment, invite his friends to take their choice. A like interesting, if not indeed romantic, uncertainty appertains to the names of the country, Britain and Albion.

We fear that the 'History of Inventions,' a book written by our enemy, might discountenance any furtive attempt to use a pocket compass to point us through the wood by which our approach to the northern city from the land side must be made. We may, however, in scorn superb and silent, avail ourselves of some such guide and vehicle as the golden arrow with which Apollo gifted the druid Abaris, to reach the walls through the devious night of the forest. Behold them sweeping round and sloping down to the Thames. These formidable barriers, what are they? An outer ditch, and a rampart formed of the trunks of trees curiously piled and overlapping. Entering the town, we find it still a thick, cumbersome wood; an aggregate, if not a segregate rather, of detached villas, each of which contains one circular room, with the family hearth in the centre, whilst a hole in the roof, opening up heaven to the inmates, professes to let in the light, and to let out the smoke, but succeeds perfectly, if we may trust our diagnosis of ophthalmic tendencies, in neither function. If we had time, we should see that circularity is a universal formula of the British mind. The roofless temples of religion; the memorial mounds of the dead; the enclosures of towns; the walls of houses; all model themselves according to the outline of the sun's disc. But we can afford to be conscious of Stonehenge, and the Nine Ladies of Hartlewood, only in the same way that a modern Londoner is conscious of Manchester, or Wiggenshall St. Mary Magdalene.

We are fortunate in our selection of a day. A grand council of the nation has been called; and, as this is the third morning since the summons, the most tardy have arrived, and business is about to commence. Questions of peace and war are to be decided; criminals and cowards are to be put upon their trial; budding heroes are to undergo the dignity of manly initiation; and the whole is to wind up with song and festivity. The warriors, in arms, have taken their seats around the open council space. Fingal has

come from his wattle mansion in the backwoods of Charing Cross, and exchanges guttural compliments with Cormac, who has left his flocks to browse the herbage of the wilderness of Whitechapel. Old friends have given and received a kindly recognition; old rivals in the race of martial or athletic glory, have subsided from looks of challenge into senatorial gravity. The whole assembly is hushed, or, if not, will be, as soon as yonder advancing Druid, the most venerable of the district, shall have enforced silence in his priestly character. Patriarchs, whose hair is white with the snow of a hundred winters; chiefs; men of conspicuous courage and conduct, or of most commanding eloquence, place before the meeting the advantages of a war with their insolent neighbours, the Atrebatii, the raids and secret robberies of whose enterprising cadets have lately become insupportable. Rises at length the Nestor of the Trinobantes. He has fought with four generations of heroes. He has driven home from a hundred battles with the heads of slain foemen fringing the furniture of his war-horses; and the measure of his glory is filled up. He is for moderation; and advises the leaving of the question to be adjusted by reprisals in kind on the part of their own youngsters. The honey of his eloquence is sweeter than bee or comb ever yielded; his words are weighted with the authority of the great departed, whose comrade he has been; he leans upon his spear easily and majestically, as Time, with a wig, might rest upon his scythe; but the only response is an inarticulate murmur of dissent. This arises from the younger warriors, whose tale of heads is not yet sufficient, and from the youths who will an hour hence claim the virile investiture of the spear. At length, when the question has been debated, and much, on both sides, said and gesticulated, a chief, scarce in his prime, but old in valour and achievement, in winged and burning words and action that must compel conviction, protests that his tribe can wage no little wars, and urges the necessity of a grand expedition. The

clash of shield and javelin, applause and multitudinous, shows that the assembly have by an overwhelming majority decided with him. Judicial cases follow. Some wretched kerne did not respond when lately the summons went forth to all good Trinobantes to take arms against their foes, the Iceni. The Druids are the judges; for crimes of state or social life are also sins against the gods. The poor fellow is convicted, and will help to cram the bulging sides of the wicker Colossus at once to be commenced for the temporary accommodation of the prisoners expected to be taken in the war that will in a few days be raging. A thief, who might meritoriously have exercised his Mercurial talent upon the herds of the Atrebatii, has lazily helped himself from those belonging to a member of his own tribe; and he is therefore cut off by theocratic sentence from the commonwealth of his people.

Whilst these affairs of national or judicial complexion are in process, a knot of youths without the council, burning for state recognition as men, are scarcely continent of their patience. The flush of hope alternates with the quick, palpitating tremor of doubt, until their claims are ratified by the august tribunal. One by one, on reason shown, they are approved as capable for the use of arms. Thereupon, in the midst of smiles of grim encouragement from the assembly whose warrior ranks they are henceforth to recruit, some discreet chief, or some relative, the sponsor of their valour, equips them severally with shield and spear. With this ceremony the serious business of the assembly is over. Most of its members will remain for public feasting and diversion. We prefer to follow the father of one of the youthful candidates, who wishes with greater privacy to celebrate at home his son's introduction to the rights and duties of manhood. He is a chief of position, and will entertain his friends and retainers at a banquet worthy of the occasion. We are secure of welcome; for he of all men, and at such a time, is not the one to encounter the infamy

of closing his mansion on a way-farer.

Through streets in which the languishing condition of the brush-wood betrays the frequency and throng of traffic, we thread our way in the wake of our elected entertainer, at present ignorant of the favour we design for him; and soon have an opportunity of inferring, from the extent of his cattle-sheds, the magnificence of his resources. The enclosure in which the mansion stands is bounded on the side of our approach by a stream, which, in its winding course from north to south, is destined, more than a thousand years in the future, to be called Walbrook, and in the far-off nineteenth century to be sought rather than to be found. Six running paces and one vigorous bound clear the stream for us, and altogether it seems a tame enough and innocent rivulet. But provoke it; stir it up with winter showers; let loose upon it the boundless stores of the Hampstead springs, and it will swell and foam with fury, ready to carry away whoever should rashly confront its chafing torrent, down, down to dark, resistless death, and to the Thames. As we draw nearer to the house, we observe the chief-like grandeur of the preparations. We pass by rude plots of garden, where the roots and fruits that shall be sparingly offered for condiment in the feast of marrow and fatness, are struggling with weeds for existence. A few steps further, and the culinary fires are revealed, where boiling, and broiling, and roasting on spits, the more substantial part of the entertainment is being prepared. Here, taken from underground garners, in which it lay covered in the ear, the corn sufficient for the feast is being beaten out before undergoing attrition in primitive hand-mills. Amongst the throng of busy slaves, male and female, a hare or two moves stealthily; and geese and hens waddle and strut, and hiss and cackle. These are domestic pets, and we need not wet our lips in anticipation of such fare, for to eat of their flesh would be profanity.

In all the imposing dignity of reeds and sticks woven into hurdles,

and mud-cemented, the mansion towers in haughty roundness, thatched with mosaic work of reeds and straw. The roof is a frustrated cone, and a column of smoke betokens the orifice of light and ventilation. At the entrance we give up our arms to the master of the house, who, with a refined instinctive ceremony, well-nigh peculiar to an early stage of culture, receives them in token of welcome to his hospitality and shelter for the night. We accept the offered bath for our feet, whilst he bridles the curiosity of his nature till the feast shall have restored our strength to announce our rank and tell our story. When the banquet is in readiness we are conducted to a lounge of straw; or, seeing that we have the appearance of strangers of distinction, to a more luxurious couch of skins. Then every guest apart receives his portion. They who have taken only one moderate meal since they rose in the early morning, fall to with appetites of an interesting vigour. But we, who have come for inspection quite as much as for refection, have time hastily to note the apparel and other habits of the company. The host and the more wealthy have collars and bracelets of gold; others of more limited means are content with the same ornaments in iron. A few have a woollen tunic of a coarse manufacture, that, fitting closely, displays the thews of limbs which exercise has developed into brawny strength rather than into symmetry; others are covered, or not covered, with the skins of beasts, fastened by a clasp, or, in default of this, by a thorn. The guests and family are ranged round the side of the hall; before each stands a stool, with a platter of wood or earthenware, or a basket-work dish of osier: the portions vary in quantity and choiceness with the rank and the exploits of the guests. Each man takes up his mess with his hands, and separates it for mastication with his teeth. If difficulties of bone or texture occur, he surmounts them with a knife, which, *pro bono publico*, in a certain place lies ready for such a contingency. Behind the

company stand servants, boys and girls, Hebes and Ganymedes, to pour the potent mead, the joy of the horn, or administer the beer, the strength of the shell. But that the warlike expedition upon which the council of the tribe has determined is imminent, the feast would likely last for days, as long, indeed, as provisions and liquors should hold out. And when these should be exhausted, a migration would take place, and the host and his company repair to a neighbour, whose hospitality would be honoured and taxed in turn.

But this feast is special. It is to celebrate the initiation of young Oscar, eldest son and pride of the host. The song is therefore to be raised; the foaming shell sent circling round; joy is to be heard in the hall. Hark! the prelude already rises from the harps, sweet as the musical gales of spring. The bards strike up a chant lodged in their memory in praise of the ancestral glory of the family. Then one alone proceeds to improvise a description of Oscar. The young hero is blooming as the bow of a shower; his hair like the mist as it rolls on the river, soft and curling in the day of the sun. A moment after birth he had been plunged, unflinching and in silence, into the neighbouring stream, whose icy covering had been broken for his immersion. Promptly he took his first sustenance from the point of his father's sword; at five years old he swam the Thames, and climbed, at six, the elms of Smithfield. The numbers swell to illustrate how, in early boyhood, he remained up to his neck for three days in a morass, and came out more sleek and fresher for the ordeal; how he snatched up a spear from a disabled hunter, and did fierce and successful battle with a boar; and how he brought down a bird, floating secure on distant wing.

'In wrestling nimble, and in running swift,
In shooting steady, and in swimming strong,
Well made to strike, to throw, to leap, to lift,
And all the sports that *Dríochas* are among,
In every one he vanquished every one,
He vanquished all, and vanquished was of none.'

So the past instances of his skill and strength and valour are summed up. Then with an accession of fire and furious inspiration, the bard foretells how, ere many days are fled, he shall attain to the novel luxury of a draught of a foeman's blood, whose head shall be brought in triumph to swell the number of those which already adorn the paternal doorposts.

The recountal of Oscar's prospective exploits fires the assembled heroes. They praise their own valiant deeds; contemptuously measure others with themselves, and exchange the ready insult and intolerable taunt. A scuffle ensues between a pair of the most eager disputants; soon they embrace the floor, disabled by mutual wounds; and are carried out to be experimented upon by druidic leechcraft. Alas! for them too late the songs of bards arise, and voices of sprightly mirth; the trembling harps of joy are strung to the battles of heroes and the heaving breasts of love. The newly-dubbed man with grace and agility executes a martial dance amongst the sharp points of sword and spear; and then leads off a general dance, in which the young men and maidens join. The elder warriors canvass the chances of the coming war.

Before unreasoning wrath or drunken sleep becomes general, Rurmar—we have to apologize for not announcing our host's name before—who is a pious man, would wish in the presence of his friends to consult the oracles of the gods, spoken by the mouth of birds and the clippings of fruit-trees, about a rather important family matter. It is a problem with him whether he ought to give his daughter, the deep-bosomed Strina-dona to Com-hal, a young chief who has joined her in the chase, and who is now, of all her lovers, most pressing in his suit. Many a leader of heroes, many a hero of the iron shield, many a youth of heavy locks comes to her father's house. They come to woo her, the stately huntress. No wonder: she is as fair as a sun-beam; her eyes are stars of light; her face is heaven's bow in showers; her dark hair flows around it like

the fleecy clouds; and she, the white-handed, dwells in the souls of many chieftains. And Comhal has already earned distinction in the hunt and in the war-field. He is as strong as Hercules with his club; beautiful as Apollo with a difference. None can better than he follow the boar, or track the wolf; or bring down the wild bird with more unerring shaft. None can give so truculent a curl to his moustache; or trim his meteor hair so daintily, or let it fall in so flaming a fold on the azure amplitude of his shoulders. None can so deftly tattoo the star upon his manly breast, or depict an owl; none mark so well upon his limbs the punctured outline of fish, or fowl, or cloud to resemble at once a weasel and a whale. His coracle is the smartest craft upon the river; his spear the sharpest in the hunt; his heart the tenderest in the hall; his head the strongest to resist the insidious attack of the joy of the shell. His chargers are the fleetest; the scythes of his war-car are the keenest and most dreadful of his tribe; and his war-whoop is the fiercest in the battle-cry. Alas for true love! alas for many virtue! The indications are unfavourable, and Comhal and Strina-dona must teach each other to wait.

There is a fear that the duel we saw an hour ago may be followed by a *mêlée*. Let us escape to stroll as we may through the town by the pale light of stars. As we step out in the direction of the Thames, the stillness is broken by the fall of venerable branches, the rustling of leaves, and the pattering of acorns to the ground. We startle the hog from his prowling, and the heron from her roost in Barbican; and presently hear the owl hooting at the nightingale because she makes night and Cheapside hideous with her senseless grief. The unbridged tide is just ebbing slowly seaward; as its wavelets break on the pebbled shore the glow-worms of the water sparkle forth a momentary protest against disturbance; the swan looks up half-awakened to menace; and a rolling porpoise, a stray otter, or a leaping

trout occasions a hollow sound that rises and falls only to deepen the silence. From the banks we tortuously and painfully repair to a grove of which every tree is populous with gods; and in which a holy man, a druidic Plato, has his cave of residence. Fleet ditch flows at his feet, and is to him Ilissus, though in long after times to be chiefly famous as an affluent of the Styx. Here by day he instructs the youth of the laity, who, designated from their infancy to arms, have no time for the twenty years' curriculum incumbent on priestly aspirants, to undergo which training these last are accustomed to frequent the sacred groves of Anglesey, or the haunts of literature and science on the breezy downs of Wilts, or the crags of the Peak. He tells us, the holy watcher for the midnight revelation of his gods, the secrets of his order. He communicates his astro-nomic or astrologic lore; initiates us with awful penalties, conditional upon violation of secrecy, into mysteries of terror and sanctity; and shows us the true esoteric meaning of that doctrine which to popular auditors he declares as an eternal transmigration of the soul of man into other human forms. We are awe-stricken by the place and the time, and the weird appearance of the hoary druidesses who minister to his wants, and participate in his divine knowledge and prowess. We leave the wondrous man to his intolerable gloom and sanctity; and return, ere yet the feast be quite done, to Rurmar's echoing hall. Here, when the company is in great part dispersed, and only those who are going to lodge for the night are left, we couch ourselves with our host, his family and visitants, in one large bed continued round the room, and invoke unwilling sleep on a skin, a rush, and a wisp of straw.

The scene changes. Three days have passed. The warriors have mustered, and Smithfield is at once the *Campus Martius*, and the place of divination. Priests, garlanded with the sacred leaves of the oak, enter upon their rites. Two luckless stragglers of the Atrebatii have been seized; of whom one is

stabbed with a sword, that his death-throes and the channels of his blood upon the ground may indicate the fortune of the expedition, and propitiate the deities. The other is, for like purposes, pitted to fight against a champion of the Trinobantes, hopelessly his overmatch. The movements of the fish which abound in the lake—in after times to be filled in or exhaled—are anxiously watched as fin and tail indulge in agitations at once propelling and prophetic; the water is disturbed that its circling undulations may fore-announce the issue of the contest; and the pair of white-winged crows who caw amongst the venerable elms are invited, by the way in which they feed, to give a verdict. On the whole the omens are satisfactory; the hymn of praise is chanted; the war-cry raised; the imprecations devoutly pronounced upon the enemy; and the expedition sets out on its march.

Later yet, and the Trinobantes have met their foes in preparation to receive them on the verge of the forest at Teddington. There the battle is joined. Blood has flowed. Slain and wounded on either side attest the thunder of the shock. Now the Trinobantes essay their well-practised tactic of pretended flight. Rallying again, they prepare for a grand advance. Holy priests are piously cursing; warriors furiously whooping; dogs baying; and women with dishevelled hair, with lurid looks and hearts of furies, flying from post to post, and hurling burning brands. Bows are bent; slings are poised; spears are levelled; the reins and the lash are given to the horses; the scythed chariots are gathering speed; yell, and din, and clatter, and horror are at their height, when, lo! a band of Druids and attendant Druidesses from the monastic caves of Sheen appear to stay the uplifted weapons and the torrent of epithet and war. Peace is made by their authority. Each side retains its captives. Our London friends retire with the bodies of their heroes who have gloriously died, and with the heads of vanquished foes dangling from their chafing, proudly-stepping steeds.

Smithfield is reached once more. A huge colossal terror of wicker-work rears its misshapen head and holds out its limbs for victims. Bring forth the lowing cattle; drive on the bleating sheep; heap up the lusty, sullen prisoners; fling in the three native cowards who, conscious of disgrace in the late encounter, have volunteered to compound by immolation for a passage into the forms of braver men; pack thick with hay and brushwood; then add the flame to crackle and roar out glory to the god of war. That divine personage, it is to be hoped, with benignant scowls receives the sacrifice.

Then to where St. Paul's shall in the far-off time to come rear its massy pile, and lift its dome sublime, to inter with due honour, with slaughter of steeds and favourite dogs, the heroes who died in the conflict. The men starkly buried in rows to-day, with arrow-heads and weapons by their side, will long ages hence be found when Wren shall dig for the foundations of his cathedral. Meanwhile, for sons who shall no more return, for fathers who have intermitted the training of their bantlings to the scent of blood, Cheapside is forlorn, and Shadwell disconsolate; and the widows of Wapping are loud in their wail.

As we raise our head, lately bowed for a moment in homage to their picturesque bereavement, the tear in our eye becomes suddenly empearled in the blessed sunbeams of our native century. Was then our spectacle only a dream? Was it fancy alone that gave denizens to winding, tangled forest-streets and huts that claimed to be a city; clustered the collective wisdom, piety, and valour of warrior, priest, and patriarch; placed shadowy meats before feigned guests; went forth with serried ghosts to meet armed phantoms in illusive war; and thundered forth a wild diapason that in truth was not so much as a whisper or an echo? Or did we, chance-favoured, stumble on one of those musty pigeon-holes in which the somewhat capricious muse of history has stowed away the archives of so many unblazoned nations? Plainly and frankly, to all these

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questions, No! We have dreamed nothing; we have nothing fancied; and the stately Clio has been to us, as in this case to all, a well-nigh senseless niggard with disabled lute.

We did not dream, we say, but shared the methodic vision of a retrospective seer. We foreswore phantasy in favour of an imagination that dared to exercise itself only within the limits of the *verisimile*. We caught stray, fragmentary, and half-contradictory voices from a score of speakers whom it boots not to name, and pressed them to unanimity and coherence. Changing the figure, our picture was a composition, but an honest one, and of which no part had been invented. Before a background of national institutions and customs by various study-painters made ready to our hand, we threw in individuals, and gave them names, humanity, and action.

But will such an explanation suffice to excuse us for presenting, in something like narrative form, gatherings, disputes, and sacrifices, which did not circumstantially happen? We think it will. If by the dialectician, then *à fortiori* by the delineator of manners, the probable, and even the possible, may oftentimes with propriety be assumed as the true. Ingenuously our little sketch cannot pronounce itself a photograph of events in which, on the one hand, all minutest accessories are brought to light, and to which, on the other, none are supplied; but it is not venturesome to declare as ingenuously that it is fairly representative of other events, which, in conditions only slightly changed, would have taken the form and complexion of history.

A. H. G.

OPERATIC NOTES AND ANECDOTES.*

PART I.

THE opera is demoralizing. *Cela dépend*. It is far from being of necessity so, for it stirs the passions, in proportion as it is artistic, varied, and dexterous, less keenly than tragedy or comedy, which assail our sensibilities with irresistible force with their recital of right and wrong in impassioned words, accompanied by suitable action. The same is said by Rousseau, inferentially if not directly, that in opera the ear is flattered by sound, rather than the heart touched by sentiment.

The opera is unnatural! No more unnatural than song in birds and perfume in flowers. The monologue of opera is as old as the hills, and spontaneous as the breath of life. Its origin dates far back in the auld lang syne, when the first little maid born into our world, wreathed at six years old her spring

garland of wild flowers for her head, and danced in her infant glee and sang, and said while she sang, 'I love my mother, and my mother loves me.' No less simple and sacred was the first operatic combination of music, dance, and song, than that old-world outburst of reverent affection, irrepressible mirth, and impulsive melody. The opera of modern days is unlike, yet the same; it is still music, dance, and song—with a difference.

Jubal played opera when he made his earliest essay at artificial music from twanging wire and pandean reed.

Miriam and her minstrel maidens recited opera by the shore of the Arabian Sea.

And David danced opera before the ark, when with accompaniment of music and song he transported the sacred cabinet from the house of Obed-Edom to its home on kingly Zion.

Let none be scandalized that we class the music of Holy Writ under this large generic name—for opera is the child of religion by a direct descent—springing up in Italy, its

* 'The History of the Opera, from its Origin in Italy to the Present Time. With Anecdotes of the most celebrated Composers and Vocalists of Europe.' By Sutherland Edwards. London: W. H. Allen and Co. 1882. 2 vols., pp. 303, 324.

modern birthplace, out of the mystery plays of the middle ages—not to mention its evidently more early progenitor in the Greek plays and the Roman festival music.

To a classical scholar its resemblance to the grand Greek tragedies, which, with their choruses, moved to the rhythm of a stately symphony throughout, will at once present itself—and these tragedies were constructed to inculcate the fear of the gods and the most awful moral lessons. In them no dramatist personæ were without a *Deus interit*: no plot was resolved without an oracle: no catastrophe attained without the fiat of fate: while all the background was alive and horrible with grand and mysterious spectres of deities, demons, and furies, boding, beckoning, forbidding.

But while the resemblance between Greek tragedy and modern opera will not fail to strike the most superficial observer, a deeper inspection will show how these two entertainments, starting from the same point of music, song, and dance appropriated to a religious festivity, took a final direction that led them far apart from each other, and issued in a total divergence.

In the tragedy the words and sentiments were everything, although the solemn and the sprightly strain lent smoothness to their intonation; the human tongue and the great heart of man spoke with power to human hearts, and left 'the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music' but a subordinate part to play.

But the opera, on the other hand, has turned the music into its *primum mobile*, and left the sense it would express to make its way into light on the wing of concerted sounds. The Greek play addressed the understanding, the opera chiefly the senses. Olden tragedy was the drama harmonized, but modern opera is music dramatized. There must needs be words, more or less appropriate, to excite feeling in the singer, and form a centre round which the composer shall marshal his compacted notes; there must be a distinct and uniting theme—a passion or purpose to be represented which shall admit of

musical treatment and exhibition—but beyond the utility of a libretto for actor and composer, no words are wanting to tell the tale of the tuneful drama, which develops itself by the aid of harmony alone. An opera must be considered a failure, whose music does not so clearly define its intent, that no monitorial adjunct is needful to explain it. If it cannot go without the crutches of intelligible dialogue, it cannot go in a musical sense at all.

The essential condition of opera is that singers act: whether they act well or ill is of little moment, as their proper function is singing. Actors, on the contrary, attempting to sing, will not fulfil the condition, as only on the wings of disciplined song will the soul of opera expand its flight. In a word, an opera is an overture dramatized—music its main strain and leading condition—music the breath of its life—and action only an accident, a super-addition, lending it a new form of expression, but not increasing its native force.

Opera, as its name imports, comes to us from Italy, the genial home and gymnasium of the arts. Opera was originally accompanied by an explanatory term, as it was a musical or other exhibition; 'opera per musica,' 'scenica per musica,' or 'opera musicale.' Its sacred origin is bespoken by the circumstance of the conversion of St. Paul being played to music in Rome so early as the year 1440. The success of such exhibitions naturally led to the adoption of profane subjects in intervals between the sacred seasons. Our term 'performance,' which is an exact equivalent of the word 'opera,' has secured for itself the same technical application for a theatrical exhibition, which the corresponding Italian term possesses, and thus relieves the foreign art-word of its aspect of solecism.

It must have been a mere accident—the casual employment of a great painter in the papal service—which gave scenic embellishment the chief place in the attractions of the opera in the time of the painter Balthazar Peruzzi. His architectural illusions were perfection—the astonishment

of even the greatest artists. Titian, it is said, was not satisfied that the plane surfaces of Peruzzi were not solid chisel-work, till he ascended a ladder and touched the paintings. What was counted a curious achievement in those days, to us seems a very small and mechanical contrivance. We have observed the same thing over and over again in continental palaces—notably in Amsterdam and Berlin, and to us, notwithstanding the crowing of our cicerone over the *miracolo* of execution, and the much-belauded example of old Zeuxis crammed down our throat in credulous childhood, the result never appeared otherwise than as a vulgar and unartistic abomination.

The 'Orfeo' of 1480, the music of which was composed by Angelo Poliziano, and the words by Cardinal Riario, nephew of the pope, is the first legitimate opera of which record exists, differing doubtless, in many points, from the elaborate compound of modern days, but presenting an essential resemblance—quite as great as that between the cultivated man of the fifteenth century and the polished frequenter of the salons of the nineteenth.

In the earlier stages of opera, choral music appears to have had undue preponderance, to the detriment of the dramatic part; but by degrees the drama claimed a fairer proportion of the work, and Vincent Galileo, father of the astronomer, is especially noted as the inventor of the recitativo.

The interval in time is great, down to 1597, more than a hundred years; but the result in achievement is still greater, when 'Dafne,' the first complete opera according to the modern pattern, was performed in the Corsi Palace, at Florence. Of this work, Ottavio Rinuccini, the first poet of the day, wrote the libretto, and Peri and Caccini, accomplished musicians, composed the music.

'Euridice,' followed three years afterwards, a musical play in five acts, represented on occasion of the marriage of Henry IV. of France, with Maria di Medici. Each of the five acts of 'Euridice' concluded with a chorus, the dialogue was in recitative, and one of the characters

sang an air which was introduced by an instrumental prelude.

The opera was now complete: the model raised, which succeeding artists were to copy, improve upon, and excel, if they could, within the prescribed limits, but not desert for any fashion of their own.

The 'Dafne' of 1597 was associated with new music in 1608 by Gagliano; and this in 1627 was translated by Opitz, 'the father of the lyric stage in Germany,' set to music by Schütz, and represented at Dresden on occasion of a royal marriage. But though this was a formal and first introduction of the opera into Germany, it was not till seventy years afterwards that the composer Keiser naturalized the musical drama in his native Wolfenbüttel.

In the earliest forms of opera the musical accompaniment occupied quite a subordinate position, and knew little of those splendid bands and magnificent harmonies of the present day which conceal, and more than make up for the poverty of vocal resources in the singing sirens. The 'Dafne' of 1597 had an orchestra only of a harpsichord, a guitar, a lyre, and a lute—all stringed instruments but one, the whole evidently subordinated to the voice. But the same opera, eleven years afterwards, as differently arranged, was accompanied by two harpsichords, two lyres, ten violas, three bass violas, two double basses, a double harp, two French violins, besides guitars, organs, a flute, clarions, and trombones. A curious device accompanied this revolutionary movement in opera, which was evidently a step in advance, by making the instrumental a larger supplement to the vocal part of the performance—the device being the appropriation of certain classes of instruments to certain characters in the play, a new-old contrivance resorted to by our modern Hoffmann, in his 'Undine,' in 1817, and later still by Herr Wagner. In the 'Dafne,' for instance, the bass violas accompanied *Orfeo*, the violas *Euridice*, the trombones *Pluto*, the small organ *Apollo*, and the never-old ferryman of the Stygian lake, *Charon*, whose

Senectus was, semper virida, sang to the music of the tinkling guitar.

The introducer of this enlarged orchestra having become chapel-master of St. Mark's in Venice, produced works of equal magnificence with that first named, until the fame of the Venetian operas was spread throughout Italy, and the new entertainment, in its more fully-developed splendour, was established in all the principal cities of the garden of Europe.

Among the leading female singers of that time was Leonora Baroni, daughter of an equally celebrated singer, Adriana Baroni. To Leonora, won by her voice and scientific skill, our Milton addressed his three Latin poems, 'Ad Leonoram Romæ Canentem.' This fair cantatrice of the eternal city was the *Lalage, dulcè ridentem*, and *dulcè loquentem*, of the beardless northern minstrel's song. When the opera attained its perfect development as a refined and ennobling species of entertainment, its migration to the more civilized countries of Europe became a mere question of means and opportunity. In Germany, Dresden, as we have already seen in the case of Opitz' translation of 'The Daphne,' was the first field of its production and elaborate cultivation. Augustus 'the Strong' of Carle (see his 'Frederick the Great') was the most munificent patron of this kind of entertainment; but his period comes down into the early middle part of the eighteenth century, whereas before his day Wolfenbüttel and Hamburg presented claims upon recognition as cultivators of the opera.

As early too as 1645 Queen Christina of Sweden sent a war ship to Italy for the conveyance of the singer Ferri to her court. Ferri is said to have been able to descend two octaves of the chromatic scale without taking breath, performing a shake on every note unaccompanied, with all the precision of a tuning instrument.

Under Leopold I. at Vienna, the earlier opera was distinguished more for its magnificence of appointment than for its scientific results. Leo-

pold was an impassioned lover of music, for it is said that, feeling his end approaching, he sent for his band and bade them play a symphony, to whose sweet sounds he died.

Apostolo Zeno and Metastasio contributed the matter of several operatic plays at Vienna, which have been set to fresh music over and over again by successive composers. Till we come down to Gluck, however, as a composer, and, later still, Mozart, there is not very much claiming our regard in the Viennese operatic department. In 1716 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu visited the opera at Vienna, and was agreeably impressed by the *al fresco* character of the entertainment, open-air performances being still in vogue occasionally in Austria and Hungary, as we ourselves can testify at no distant date. Real water was of course one of the attractions—said 'real water' being one of the barbarous abuses of scenic illusion—fatal to general effect, and in some cases giving rise to ludicrous incidents.

In one of the stage effects arranged by Bernino, who was sculptor, architect, and scenic painter too, the Tiber, 'real water,' was represented as rushing from the rear of the stage forward towards the orchestra in such threatening guise, that the audience rose to flee in real alarm from the impending danger, and nothing but the subsidence of the flood through open traps in the floor stayed their flight.

The same incongruous union of the real and ideal appears in the introduction of live birds into the visionary groves of the Haymarket in the days of 'The Spectator.' 'The sparrows and chaffinches at the Haymarket fly, as yet, very irregularly over the stage, and instead of perching on the trees and performing their parts, these young actors either get into the galleries, or put out the candles.' A truce with these imperfections, which have not yet lost their hold, however, upon the grosser tastes and material likings of the multitude. A man must be specially educated for the function who can criticise and relish a picture *per se*; and the same must be said of the richest and most rational en-

joyment of the music of opera, apart from its decorative adjuncts.

The rage for spectacular adornment of the musical drama was at its height about the middle of the last century, when at Dresden accommodation was furnished on the stage for manœuvring four hundred horsemen together; when at Stuttgart, there were one hundred and twenty dancers in the corps de ballet; and when from the number of soldiers on the stage, and their excellent drill by De Chassé, maitre de ballet, Louis XV. named him his general.

As the heroic romances of other days—the 'Grand Cyrus'—the 'Pharamond,' the 'Cassandra'—have given place to the novel of the *monde* or *demi-monde*, the *life-novel* in its most emphatic expression, so have the classical themes of the original opera, with their heathen machinery, subsided into the modern domestic of the 'Spanish Barber,' the 'Lost Spoon,' and the 'Don Pasquale.' The lofty flight and at the same time monotonous plot of the early operatic craftsmen gave rise to the squib of Favart—

'Quiconque voudra
Faire un opéra,' &c., &c.

The which we may thus render:—

'Whoever would an op'ra make,
Must lit'rally our counsel take:
On Pluto let him first intrude,
And borrow thence a Hellish brood:
Next let him mount the upper air
And bring down gods—at least a pair:
Then, as his third desiderandum,
A hero be pick'd up at random.
The plot with dancing overlay,
Till one can scarce find out the play.
Amid a summer happy fête,
Bid a wild tempest sudden beat:
And interrupt a tranquil feast
With roar and rout of evil beast,
Lion, or deadly snake at least. }
He that would thus an op'ra make
Away must reason's dictates shake;
Must sing, where no one sang before—
Must dance, where none would beat the
floor.
As to *Finale*, never mind it—
Its end somehow 'twill surely find it.'

The history of the Italian opera in England is the history of Handel, its greatest composer at that period. Driven from Hamburg by a quarrel with his colleague in the conduct of the orchestra in that city, and be-

taking himself to Hanover, Handel very naturally followed the fortunes of those English nobles whom political connexions led to sojourn in the Electorate. In 1711 he produced 'Rinaldo,' his first opera, at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket. His last opera was called 'Deidamia,' and was composed in 1740, after which he devoted himself exclusively to the production of oratorios, which are, in point of fact, sacred operas, *non costumés*. Oratorios have all the variety, *verve*, and perfection of the opera, apart from its scenic and liveried accompaniments. But the great composer and director had sailed upon a very tempestuous sea, during his previous career, from the emulation of rival houses, the discords of ill-conditioned singers, and the shutting up from bankruptcy of the Royal Academy of Music (or the Opera House under royal patronage) which he directed. He engaged Buononcini and Arne to compose for it. Buononcini had his party of patrons, who rang to the skies applauses of all his pieces, while those of his far greater maestro were as passionately run down. This rivalry led to Swift's celebrated epigram:—

'Some say that Signor Buononcini
Compared to Handel is a ninny;
While others say that to him Handel
Is hardly fit to hold a candle;
Strange that such difference should be
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.'

Buononcini was a musician of considerable merit, and lived till nearly a hundred years of age in the exercise of his profession.

The quarrels of Faustina and Cuzzoni, favourite Italian *prime donne* of Handel's day, are classical. Their styles were so entirely different that there was not a shadow of pretext for commending one at the expense of the other. La Faustina was brilliant—La Cuzzoni expressive. The pathos of the one and the rapid execution of the other were distinctly characteristic. As if, however, the throne of supremacy on the stage admitted of only one sovereign, those who liked the one could not but cry down the other of these great artists. When one began to sing, the partisans of

the other began to hiss. Cuzzoni, pretty but cold, had the Countess of Pembroke on her side. Faustina, lively and familiar, commanded the men. One of these *preux chevaliers* of the latter singer must have given birth to the ungallant epigram:—

‘Old poets sing that beasts did dance
Whenever Orpheus played;
So to Faustina’s charming voice
Wise Pembroke’s asses brayed.’

Cuzzoni had to give way. She was got rid of by the directors by the shabby device of offering her one guinea less of salary than her rival, which her pride would not allow her to accept. Twenty-three years afterwards the poor soul sang in London, old, infirm, and voiceless. In Holland she was imprisoned for debt after this; and finally died at Bologna, earning a scanty maintenance by button-making. Improvidence on the part of these pampered pets of the public may be charged with the larger share of their misfortunes; nevertheless, no feeling mind can fail to regret the hard fate by which—on les adore quand elles sont belles,—on les jette à la voirie quand elles sont mortes.

Faustina was happier, well married, and died in 1783 at Venice, being then no less than ninety years of age.

As the composition of our national air, ‘God save the King,’ dates from Handel’s time, it may be permitted to interject that Handel is not its composer, nor Dr. John Bull, who harmonized a simple chant on the four words ‘God save the king,’ nor Lulli, nor any one besides of earlier date than Henry Carey, who composed the tune, exactly as it is sung now, in 1740, in celebration of the taking of Portobello by Admiral Vernon.

London could not support two Italian operas; and yet political rather than artistic considerations induced the leading nobility to support an opera of their own in opposition to that patronized by the king, the first George. The natural consequence befel, that both specu-

lations were ruined, and no Italian opera existed in 1737.

Another reason, doubtless, was the immense popularity achieved by the English ‘Beggars’ Opera,’ acted in a language ‘understood of the common people,’ recommended by really attractive melodies, and by the same class of incidents that made the prose melodrama of ‘Jack Sheppard’ so popular at a more recent date. Porpora, the manager of the rival house, retired to the classic shades of the King’s Bench, and Handel to the Elvian field of the Foundling Hospital.

But the opera shortly revived. In 1741, the Earl of Middlesex undertook the management of the King’s Theatre, with Galuppi as composer, who produced several successful operas. And so on through the remainder of the century. The best pieces from Italy and Germany were usually performed in London for years before they found their way into France—Italian opera, until within the bounds of the present century, not being fully naturalized in Paris. To Handel much of the excellence of opera in its after history in England is due, from the great care he bestowed on the accurate execution of operas produced under his direction.

Of the gentlemen singers of his day the fame chiefly survives of Farinelli. This singer first distinguished himself by a trumpet-song in Porpora’s opera of ‘Eomene.’ Farinelli sang it in Rome in 1722, and in London in 1734. His one sustained note in this song, following the trumpet, called forth the somewhat profane exclamation from an enthusiastic English lady, ‘There is but one God and one Farinelli.’ This fact robs the great Frederick’s kindred profanity—‘There is but one God and one Voltaire’—of its only possible claim to remark—that of epigrammatic originality. The original *mot* was not worth remembering—the copy is ‘weary, flat, stale,’ and in every sense contemptible. Fritz borrowed his wit and his deism alike from England.

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LIFE'S GOLDEN PRIME.

LONDON SOCIETY.

RAY.

BY MISS J. RAY.

RAY.

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